

Enrico Magnani

THE FORGOTTEN PEACEKEEPERS

**The United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB) (1947-1952) and the
Military observers of the Balkan Sub-Commission (1952-1954)**



Roma, CISM, 2023

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Introduction

The motives behind choosing the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB) as subject of this study lay on both personal and professional interests. Since my first years as a student at Rome University, I was extremely interested in Eastern European and Balkan history. Later, I had served starting from 1991 in the Public Information field relating to Peace Support Operations especially on editorial aspects regarding publications of books and essays before joining in 1995 the EU Mission in Palestine that enabled me to be in direct involvement of peace operations in the field.

My experience with the European Union Mission in Palestine was followed by another experience at the Missions in Bosnia-Herzegovina OSCE in 1996 and 1997. Afterwards, I was recruited in 1999 by the United Nations to serve in MINURSO where I have continued to serve till the present time.

My interest in the United Nations peacekeeping operations turned to be more professional. The participation with the decision-makers group of MINURSO allowed me to study, learn, interpret and examine principles and mechanisms (informally and unofficially) of the United Nations Organization from inside.

My position as active peacekeeper, as well as the willing to deepen my knowledge and awareness, was further enriched with my partaking at activities of the International Commission of Military History (ICMH), Consortium of Revolutionary Era (CRE), International Committee for the History of Technology (ICOHTEC), Baltic Defense College (BDC), with the presentation of several papers, all focused on the peace-support operations since XIX Century.

The work of Rosalyn Higgins was an initiative in this respect that was descriptive and limited with regard to a number of aspects. I acknowledge that his work inspired and influence my research inquisitiveness and pushed me to deepen researches and explore further the issue of peace operations. Yet, I feel that one big question should be answered which is: to what extent the UNSCOB, as a case of this study, succeeded in achieving peace in the Balkans? And what are the challenges that faced the UN in meeting its objectives the Balkans?

The UNSCOB as subject of this study allowed me to put together the two above-mentioned interests. It further allowed me to respond to the question why the United Nations, among the peacekeeping missions, did not officially include the work of the Special Committee on the Balkans, and the military observers of the Balkan Special Sub-Commission of United Nation Peace Observation Commission.

The official answer of the organization did not cover all the real aspects and shade of the Special Committee operational and legal framework.

The Special Committee was a subsidiary organ under the General Assembly and did not report to the Secretary-General about the whole activities that were considered appropriate if one took into account the growing complexities of the United Nations.

Further, the Greek civil war and the international actions around this country are several paradigms of the history. The unresolved issues have roots from the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire, the inter-state rivalries of the nations of the region, as well as economic and social underdevelopment of Greece and the struggle for it as subcomponent of the conflict. The confrontation, through a proxy war, between the two rising blocks

During the work of this research, there emerges the Special Committee that did not only pave the way in many aspects to similar activities on the ground by the United Nations in the future. Several issues appeared as innovative and since then, are perpetuated and remain

presents in the operational, legal, financial and ethical frameworks of the UN peace-related activities on the terrain.

Again, the personal curiosity led to the identification of the Greek civil war not simply as a minor conflict and a crisis of rising Cold War; it was one of the first confrontations between two ideological blocks, and included, aside the dynamics of two polarized politico-military entities, unresolved rivalries emerged after the Balkan wars and WWI and WWII.

The entire issue was not a clearly delimited phase of European history of seventy years ago, but projected some elements of reflection on the contemporaneity. Starting from the roles of the international community to the interstate confrontation within international organizations, passing through civil wars and opposed economic, social and cultural models, and ending in the management of the borders and conciliation between neighbor states, often former warring. All of it remained a matter of policy-making of the present days.

The methodology used in approaching the topic of this study is a historical one based on description of historical facts, events, and figures. It enables the researcher to examine, assess, compare, and shed light on weaknesses, restrictions, as well as strengths of the examined cases.

The study is articulated on a number of chapters that highlight the regional and international context before the establishment of the UNSCOB, the establishment of the UNSCOB, the mandate of the mission, its legal basis, its political control, its administrative and military aspect, and well as its relation with the different influential players (Hosting State/s, Members States, non-Member States and *de facto* authorities).

The plan for this work, and its content as well, saw a major change from the original project submitted and approved.

During the researches, there appeared the need to include in a new chapter devoted to the conciliation action related to the Greek civil war crisis, attempted by the then Australian Foreign Minister, Herbert Vere Evatt.

The conciliation attempt, launched without any pre-consultation with other partners involved in the Balkan issue, despite efforts and good willing of the Australian official, did not bring results at all. On the contrary, it originated crispation between Australia from one side and US and UK on the other. The activities of this short-lived body, could be considered weak-willed, as were the results of the Conciliation Committee.

However, it allowed to disclose more clearly how deep, and historically rooted, were the divisions and rivalries of the states of the region, which the ideological insurrection of Greek communist at the end represented an additional element to an already inextricable scenario.

The work allowed to know more and to be more aware about my work discovering that many situations, not only in political dimension, but also in the administrative and budgetary had a line of continuity.

Per se', the work did not included new elements, but there is an attempt to put several inputs in a more coherent asset. The key aspect is the attempt to relativizing the first field activity of the UN with other following peace-stabilization missions, focusing in aspects that till today mark it.

Chapter 1

Regional and international context

The war and the foreign invasion catalyzed already present fractures in the Greek society and the exile of the King exacerbated it. The Monarch and his government had little support within the country and the resistance movement had for long time no substantial contact with the institutional framework of the government, which was recognized by the Allied.

Like in many other countries, the resistance boosted the capacity and influences of the communists-backed groups, already used to a semi-clandestine life in the pre-war era. Also this activism boosted the membership to the communist party, very small in the pre-war era, and adhesion to its ideology among the Greeks.

The non-communist groups were less organized, reflected the fragmented political life of the country and their action against the invasion started after that the communists take a quasi-leadership position within the resistance movement and obtained a profile also to massive military, economic and political support from the Western Allied (almost exclusive British, that imposed a de facto political protectorate over the Greek file).

The end of WWII means for Greece the lost almost the ten per cent of the population and serious damage of an already poor economic structure.

Like in many countries in continental Europe, the end of the war and the Axis occupation led to the formation of a coalition, which was ineffective due to deep divide between right and left components and the two wings were divided between them too. The division between led to the December 1944 crisis which saw the intervention of British forces against the communist armed elements in Athens and elsewhere. The conflict was apparently solved with Varkiza agreement of February 1945, but did not open the way for a reconciliation. The KKE which planned the insurrection since WWII was in, kept the weapons and move its forces in the mountainous areas and close to the borders with Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, countries which provided all the necessary support and worked as rear area for the operations of the insurgents.

The dimension of the Greek conflict had also an international dimension, not only due to the ideological confrontation between East and West, but included elements which remount to the claims and unsolved border disputes of Balkans Wars and WWI, like the long-standing aspirations on Greek Thrace and Macedonia or the claims of Athens on Northern Epirus (or Sothern Albania). There were frequent violations of borders and constant and mutual allegations and often skirmishes.

Aside to it, there was the common perception in all the Greeks, regardless their political position, that an external intervention would help their stance and the affirmation of their own line.

Greece was the first major conflict between the West, led by US, and the East, under the hegemony of USSR, probably, without international intervention (starting from the support of the Soviet block to KKE) the war would be much shorter and bloody.

According the agreements on the sphere of influences, clearly left Greece under the Western side and the Soviet for till today unclear reasons formally abide and did not intervened when British troops crushed the communist insurrection, two months after the Moscow Conference (where Stalin and Churchill reached an agreement).

Under the point of view of the rising Western block, the communist insurrection of 1944 and the civil war as a sign of real stance of Moscow. The precedent of Greece led the action of Western group of states in other crisis like the partition of Germany, the status of Berlin and the communist aggression in Korea. The pragmatic, and ambiguous, behavior of Moscow in

Greece was directed by the primary interest to keep the control on the ancillary states in the region, especially after the schism of Yugoslavia. Soviet Union, while helping the insurrection, when realized that only a massive and a *prima facie* intervention would solve the war in her favour, but with the concrete risk of direct confrontation with US and allies, lost the interest in, *de facto* abandoning the KKE fighters (not the leadership, that found an exile in USSR).

The Truman doctrine was the element that changed the situation in Greece, with the massive financial support for the country (and Turkey). This did not leave room for compromise stance on the civil war and to the perspective of the arrival of USSR in the central Mediterranean.

The rehabilitation of Greece economy, which meant the end of the quasi-protectorate of Britain over Athens, was carried out within the bilateral channels and with the expropriation of the local political leadership considered corrupted and incompetent. The judgement of the US advisors over the Greek political class people was very severe and their ineptitude was considered one of the main reasons of the social origins of the success of KKE among the local population.

Only the military victory on the ground allowed the beginning of the economic re-habilitation of Greece and facilitated the partial normalization of the domestic political life, however marked by the absence, from the official scene, of the communist party and the *de facto* marginalization of the socialist one.

Only after the crisis of 1974, originated by the attempted annexationist coup in Cyprus, it was possible the full normalization of the Greek political life, with the end of the old and news bans possible with the re-installation of a democratic institutional framework.

This while the establishment of complete normal diplomatic relations of Greece with its neighbor countries should wait until 22 March 2016, when Athens and Tirana have agreed to end the formal state of war that has existed between them since World War II - although several other hot issues remained unresolved (this declaration was preceded by a similar one on 12 April 1986 on the same issue, but that did not entered in effect).¹

The state of war dates back to the October 1940 invasion of Greece by Italian troops based in Albania, which was then under a regime backed by Italy's Fascists. It remained in force after World War II because of Greek claims to part of southern Albania.

¹ Cfr. <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/albania-and-greece-agree-to-abolish-the-war-law-03-22-2016>, Balkansight 22 March 2016, consulted on 29 September 2017; Greece's State of War With Albania to End, NYT, April 13, 1986, <http://www.nytimes.com/1986/04/13/world/around-the-world-greece-s-state-of-war-with-albania-to-end.html?mcubz=0>, consulted on 29 September 2017.

Chapter 2

The conspiracy of KKE

The military and political developments of last part of WWII pushed the KKE leadership that it was the time come to seize the power.²

This was originated by the important role in the anti-Nazi resistance, where the Communist established an important armed element of the entire resistance movement, reinforced by the approach of the Red Army in the neighboring countries pursuing the retreating Wehrmacht forces. Senior official of the Greek Communist Party look to persuade the Soviet to enter in the country and setting up similar regimes like in Bulgaria and Romania. For this reason, in August 1944 the KKE chief for Eastern Macedonia and Thrace met in Bulgaria the leaders of the local communist party and the Soviet Marshal Fedor Tolbukhin, Commander-in-Chief of 4th Ukrainian Front, and made such a request, while other Greek communist officials repeated the same request in November of the same year.³

The heavy clashes between communist insurgents and British troops in Athens and elsewhere in Greece in December 1944 made it clear to the KKE leadership that the behavior of the British Military advisors operating in the country during the resistance against the Axis, was in line with the anti-Communist stance of Churchill and pushed for a renewed the request of support to Soviet and Balkans communist parties, but again in vain.⁴

It should be recalled that the effectiveness of the KKE military wing during the resistance was based mainly on the fact that they, like many Communists parties in Europe were under heavy pressures from their government, as agent of the Bolshevik Russia and for their insurrectionist approach.

The KKE suffered long and harsh persecution from the conservative governments since 1919; the Greek communist movement become soon clandestine and prepared a vast and efficient network of operational and support elements, which represented at the moment of the arrival of Axis forces in Greece (1941), a useful tool to start the armed resistance against them and getting a leading role within the Greek anti-Axis movement. Despite the Bulgarian communist leader Georgi Dimitrov (and former co-chief of Komintern, together with the Italian Palmiro Togliatti) personal support in forwarding a request of assistance of KKE to Moscow, the Greeks received an initial, negative answer.⁵

Also Yugoslavia initially refused to provide support, but in November, the local communist leadership pledged support to the insurgency plans of their Greek comrades. The initial position of Yugoslavs create a bitter surprise in the KKE, but probably the firm answer of

² IATRIDES, J. O., 'Revolution or Self-Defense? Communist Goals, Strategy and Tactics in the Greek Civil War', on Journal of Cold War Studies, vol. 7, N.3, Summer 2005, pp.5-9.

³ On 10 September 1944, Bulgaria changed side and declared war on Germany as an Allied Power. The Germans swiftly disarmed part of the occupation troops in Yugoslavia, another part resisted tenaciously to the Operation 'Treubruch' (defection). The remnants of Bulgarian regular retreated to the omen country and joined the new 450,000-strong Bulgarian National Armed Forces (Bulgarska Narodna Armija) under Lieutenant-General Ivan Marinov. In the first week of October, Bulgarian forces, in accordance with Tito, liberated Yugoslavian Macedonia and Southern Serbia, while the 1st Bulgarian Army moved to the north with the troops of the 3rd Ukrainian Front through Eastern Yugoslavia and SW Hungary and linked up with British units in Austria in May 1945. The Soviet troops, in their offensive against German, Croats and Chetnick forces in Yugoslavia meticulously avoided to enter to Greece from Bulgaria

⁴ Lt. Col. JOSLEN, H. F., *Orders Of Battle. Second World War 1939-45*, London, Naval and Military Press, 1960.

⁵ DIMITROV, G., *The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov 1939-1949*, ed. by Banac I., New Haven, Yale University Press, 2003, p. 345.

British forces worried the new rulers of Belgrade, who considered that a similar development could take place also in Yugoslavia.⁶

In May 1945, the return in Greece of Nikos Zahariadis from Dacahu, the leader of KKE, means a new push for the plans to seize the power in Greece. For the end of the year he launched a comprehensive study plan and in January 1946 a KKE delegation arrived in Moscow seeking political advise and financial assistance.

Internally, Zahariadis faced the constant criticism of Markos Viafadis, on the path to adopt for the confrontation. Viafadis, who as leader of the military wing and had a large experience in the struggle against the Axis, perceived even before the arrival of the US supplies that a guerrilla tactics was the only one that could bring results, even in a long term. 'General' Markos advise Zahariadis and the KKE leadership, that a conventional confrontation was a lost cause. Despite his criticism, Viafadis implemented loyally the political decisions of the KKE to enter in a full fledged conflict with the Greek regular forces.

The Soviet officials advised the Greek comrades to follow two-lines strategy: continue the political agitation while also preparing for armed struggle.⁷

Moscow, looking for global ambitions, initially proposed to the Greeks a double strategy (the same proposed to the other Communist parties) if one line fail, the other would be put forward. In game theory terms, Moscow was promoting both the optimal outcome (establishing the monopoly of Communist power in a country) and a suboptimal result (Communist parties participation in government unity, acceptance of democratic and parliamentary legitimacy, multiparty elections, etc.). In general terms, the adoption for one policy did not necessarily exclude to cross into another, this depend on local and international circumstances as well as on the estimate of the adversary's comparative strength and likely reactions. The relations between KKE and Moscow where influenced by the international situation and this impacted on the decision making of the Greek communist movement for the insurrection and management of the war against Athens.

Thus, the relations between KKE and other Communist parties in the area between 1944 and 1946 where more open and transparent and their leaders (Yugoslavia, Albania and Italy) considered that the circumstances were favorable for the Greek to seize the power and pressed Moscow to support and to take greater risk *vis-a-vis* with the West. The visits of Zahariadis in Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Soviet Union and Bulgaria during the spring 1946 clearly indicate that there was a new orientation in supporting the Communist uprising in Greece. Again, Sofia' support was important.

In April 1946 Zahariadis, during his meeting with Dimitrov, submitted a more organic and detailed request of support. His request was immediately forwarded to Moscow: he requested the approval of Soviet Union for the creation of guerrilla army and the establishment of commissioned officers training centers capable to accommodate 8.000 fighters in Yugoslavia and 2.000 each in Albania and Bulgaria.⁸

In October 1946 the KKE announced the establishment of the GDA (Greek Democratic Army). The timing of it disclose the falsity of the Communist propaganda saying that the KKE uprising was the answer to the enunciation of the Truman Doctrine and the launch of the Marshall Plan, respectively in March and June 1947. It would unrealistic imagine that an insurrection of this impact could have erupted in Greece in 1946 without the express

⁶ DEDIJER, V., *Tito speaks: his self-portrait and struggle with Stalin*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1953, p. 238; RISTOVIC, M., L'insurrection de décembre à Athènes: intervention britannique et réaction yugoslave (décembre 1944-janvier 1945), in 'Balcanica', Vol. 37, 2006, p. 272.

⁷ ULUNIAN, A., 'The Soviet Union and the Greek question, 1946-1953', in GORI, F. and PONS, S., eds., *The Soviet Union and Europe in the Cold War, 1943-1953*, London, McMillan, 1996.

⁸ MARANTZIDIS, N., 'The Greek Civil War (1944-1949) and the International Communist System' in *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 15. N. 4, Fall 2013, p. 33.

agreement of the Soviet, *in primis*, and Balkan communists parties. Similarly, the support to the KKE would not depend on the evolution of the dynamics of international politics in Southeastern Europe and eastern Mediterranean. Also in October 1946 the top advisors of Stalin (Beria, Mikoyan, Malenkov, Zhdanov and Suslov) recommended a rapid and massive supply of funds, aid, military, medical and logistic materiel.⁹

Obviously, the new position of Moscow affected the stance of other brother parties and in 1947, the aid to the communists elements in Greece increased sharply, crossing the border with Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. Albania participated at the process to establish and activate training camps (Rubik for Albania, Bulkes, for Yugoslavia, Ivailograd, Berkovitsa and Svilengrad for Bulgaria) for KKE cadres, in preparation of the insurgency. The number of the GDA fighters sharply grew and there were recorded, at the beginning of 1949, 5.000 in Albania, 3.000 each in Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.¹⁰

The international aid to the KKE was institutionalized with a meeting in Bled (Slovenia, Yugoslavia), where the military leaderships of the three border countries with Greece formally committed their government in helping the insurgence, providing all kind of support and setting up an advisory committee the GDA. During the meeting, Hungary and Romania were urged to support the Greeks insurgent as well.¹¹

To confirm that the plan was cautiously and detailed studied, during the 11th Congress of French Communist Party in Strasbourg (25-29 June 1947), the KKE delegate, Miltiadis Porphyrogenis, announced the intention of his party to create a distinct government with its own state, structure and armed forces.¹²

This was part of the mainstay plan, named 'Lakes' (Limnes, in Greek). The plan, conceived with the massive Yugoslavian advise, had the objective to take the control of Northern Greece with a provisional capital as Thessaloniki, and then move toward South and the islands. The military tool of it included an army of at least 50.000 troops. According some scholars, this plan was also sent to Moscow and approved by the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party.¹³

Among the Western group of states, the US, especially, were conscious of the risk represented by the possibility of the Communist victory in Greece and the treat which would represent for the security and stability of Mediterranean, Turkey opening the door to a penetration of Soviet Union towards the South endangering Southern Europe, North Africa and Middle East.¹⁴

A politico-military project rely in so heavy way to USSR plan to enlarge her area of influence, could not remain out of the dynamics which affected the Communist world, and the crisis which stormed the COMINFORM and the Yugoslavian defection, represented the real end of the KKE insurgency. The COMINFORM founding conference (22-27 September Szklarska Poreba, Poland) saw a great attention to the Greek issue; during the development of the civil war and the explosion of the Titoist schism, Zdanov, one of the closest aide of Stalin, reflect the main concern of the Kremlin: that the stability of Albania and Bulgaria as part of the Soviet-controlled Europe must not be endangered in any way. This especially after

⁹ ULUNIAN, op. cit, p. 147.

¹⁰ 'Rapport Militaire', Col. EMG Daniel Ch., Swiss military attaché, 24 Feb.1949, in *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses*, Dodis 4080, Légation Suisse en Grèce, Genève.

¹¹ LAGANI, I., 'Les Communistes des Balkans et la guerre civile grecque, mars 1946-aout 1949', in 'Communisme', N.9, 1986.

¹² The self-proclamation of the 'Greek Democratic Republic' was made on 23 February 1947, and the decision was taken by the KKE Politburo at the beginning of that year.

¹³ MATSUNY, V., *The Cold War and Soviet Insecurity: The Stalin Years*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 35.

¹⁴ ACHESON, D., *Present at the creation*, New York, Norton, 1969; GADDIS J. L., *George F. Kennan: An American Life*, New York, Penguin Press, 2011.

mid-1948 changed dramatically with the Tito-Stalin clash and impacted heavily on the KKE and its military uprising: they attempt to keep a equidistant position, but soon found itself cornered and obliged to choose a side. For the party's leaders, all devoted Stalinists, the only option was to remain faithful to Moscow and no other choices were viable.

As consequences, the relations between Greek and Yugoslav leaders rapidly moved into a mutual suspicion and, gradually but rapidly, become openly hostile. The issue of the Slavo-Macedonian question (which, at the early contacts, as sign of good willing, was put aside by the KKE leadership) and the request of the nationalists' elements for the autonomy also ignited this. However, the supply of Yugoslavia to the KKE remain relevant, even progressively decreasing, for all the 1948, but ceased at the end of that year.

The new situation obliged the other Communist country to set up rapidly a replacement chain of supply in consideration of the new situation, which reduced dramatically the strategic space of the 'Greek Democratic Republic'. On March 1948 an *ad hoc* committee was established with representatives of the Communists parties of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Romania and Greece (one of the two Greek representatives was the 'foreign minister of the Democratic Republic of Greece', Roussos. The Committee was provided by funds to buy new weapons (even if the majority of weaponry transferred to the Greeks insurgents belong to the captured ones of Axis forces) and anything else would be useful to sustain, nowadays, a quasi-conventional conflict and no more a guerrilla war. Relevant among the duties of the committee was the transportation and care of children and adult whom the GDA was removing from rural areas of Northern Greece and resettling in other Communist countries.¹⁵

The formal expulsion of Yugoslavia from COMINFORM, declared on 28 June 1948, boosted the role of Poland and Czechoslovakia in providing support to the KKE in terms of weapons, supplies and funds. Despite the important replacement of supplies coming via and by Yugoslavia, the defection of Belgrade from the support of insurgency, it represented the major shift of the civil war. Even well before the battles of Florina, considered the major defeat of the Communist forces, KKE military apparatus had been shrinking while those of the Greek government (Greek National Army, Royal Greek Air Force, Royal Greek Navy, Royal Gendarmerie and Urban Police) had been gaining strength as its number, command structures and capabilities, weaponry, discipline and morale improved enormously.¹⁶

While the help from Warsaw and Prague remained a secret strongly kept for years, the propagandistic machine of the Soviet and other European and elsewhere communists' parties worked intensively openly setting up a large network of committees to support the 'struggling Greek democratic people'. The evolution on the military side, with the progressive erosion of the territory of the 'Greek Democratic Republic', and the foreseeable defeat of the insurgency signified by the failure of the offensive of summer 1948, led, since the beginning of 1949, Soviet officials to search way to end the civil war in Greece and look to a face-saving option. The insurgency failed to reach it's targets and, paradoxically, open the door to potential risks to the stability and integrity of Communists states in the Balkans. The planned GNA offensive against Albania, even more political and propagandistic option of the government of Athens than a real one, showed that the concern of Stalin about the integrity of Tirana and Sofia were not totally unrealistic.

Several changes affected the already collapsing insurgency, in January 1949 Markos Vafiadis was relieved of his role commander of EVS for 'serious illness' while a large scale purge of the pro-Tito faction elements inside KKE shattered the rest of its military wing, recalling a

¹⁵ ULUNIAN, op. cit, p. 152.

¹⁶ SHAREDER, C. R., *The Whitered Vine: Logistic and the Communist Insurgency in Greece, 1945-1949*, Westport, Praeger, 1999.

similar situation which affected the Republic side while the Franchist regime was on the edge of victory between 1938 and 1939.

Appeared that the only option remained was to conduct a sporadic guerrilla. In early April 1949, Zahariadis was summoned to Moscow and informed that there was to be the decision to close the insurgency and few days after the supply chains to the GDA were halted and the authorities of Sofia and Tirana closed the border crossing points between the 'Greek Democratic Republic', Bulgaria and Albania. The borders were reopened in May in the preparation of the last offensive of GDA, which represented the military and political end of the Greek Communist insurgency on August 1949.

Despite that, Zahariadis continued in his hopes; he sent a letter to Stalin in September informing him that the units of GDA will be withdrawn, mostly in Albania, and in Greece remain guerrilla units to enforce the partisan warfare, with the core of conventional units will remain ready to return in the country to re-open the conflict when the circumstances will allow it. The GDA was completely dependent on the military assistance provided by the Communist states; the change of doctrine from a guerrilla to full scale war was possible only to the outside support provided by those and the conflict could end much sooner or even it did not start at all, due to the lack of minimal launching conditions. As military and guerrilla phenomena, the Greek Communist insurgency ran for other, few months, perpetuating a tragedy, who let the door open to harsh and more and more effective repressive policies of the government of Athens and prolonged, more than necessary, the presence of UN military observers.¹⁷

¹⁷ The end of Zahariadis was a mirror of the drama that crossed the Greek communist movement. The leadership of the KKE found refuge in Tashkent. However, following the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953, Zahariadis clashed with the new Soviet leadership, as he opposed the new direction taken by the USSR Communist Party under Nikita Khrushchev. In May 1956, during the 6th Plenum of the Central Committee of the KKE (in exile), the Communist Party of the Soviet Union intervened to expel Zahariadis from the post of the Secretary-General. In February 1957, Zahariadis was also expelled from the KKE, as were many of his supporters. Zahariadis spent the rest of his life in exile in Siberia, initially in Yakutia and later in Surgut (Russian Far East). In 1962, desperate from the devastating conditions of his exile, he was able to reach Moscow. There he visited the Greek Embassy and asked that he be transported to Greece, where he wanted to stand trial for his actions. It is not known as of today that his request was taken into consideration. Immediately after he left the Greek Embassy, he was arrested by the Soviet Militsiya and was taken back to Surgut. There, according to KGB claims, he committed suicide, aged 70, in 1973. According to other sources he was executed. As of 2012, the Russian state archive records relating to the circumstances of his death remain secret. In December 1991, just a few days after the fall of the USSR, Zahariadis' remains were returned to Greece, and he was given a funeral, which gave his supporters the opportunity to honour him. In 2011, a National Conference of the KKE fully rehabilitated Nikos Zahariadis as Secretary-General of the party. This was in line with the KKE's general political reorientation since the collapse of USSR; the party has adopted the view that the USSR Communist Party embarked on a revisionist line after Khrushchev's takeover.

Also the life of Markos Vafiadis, a. k. a. 'General Markos' reflected this drama. In December 1947 he was appointed Prime Minister and War Minister of the Provisional Democratic Government. During the last stages of the civil war his growing disagreement with Zahariadis on issues of military doctrine led to his removal from the post of Prime Minister in August 1948 and in January 1949 from War Minister. In October 1950, he was ousted from KKE, while he was in exile in USSR, where he had fled after the military defeat. After the end of Stalin's era, Markos Vafiadis was restored into KKE and was elected as a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the party. However, new disagreement with the party leadership led to his removal from office in January 1958 and to his second ousting from KKE in June 1964. After the party split in 1968, the so-called "interior" faction of KKE restored him. In March 1983, after 33-year exile in USSR, he returned to Greece, and in the island of Chios where he later published his memoirs. He became a political supporter of Andreas Papandreou and in November 1989 and April 1990, he was honorarily elected into the Greek parliament through the nationwide list of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK). He died in 1992 at age of 86.

Chapter 3

Before and after Operation 'Manna', British and US forces and presence in Greece and the civil war

The role of Britain in Greek politics has been important in several moments. Greece received the special attention of Great Britain since her independence in 1831. The WW I and its aftermath (e.g. Greek-Turkish war) confirmed it. The WW II saw a major involvement of Britain assisting the country against the Italian first and then, the German aggression. This began under negative auspices but continued with the support of the resistance movement against the Axis forces. This was one of Britain's top priorities in the area. Resistance activities became more intense in October 1942 and it was set up an ad hoc body, the BLU, tasked to support it, including direct actions against the Axis forces. The next step was to co-ordinate the activities of the various resistance movements and monitor on the political forces in Greece. Thus, the British resistance and intelligence group became BMM (G).¹⁸

The mission controlled the distribution of money, arms, and other supplies. Although resistance activities continued without spectacular act of resistance organised by British and Greek forces, the British Mission remained and expanded to protect the British interest in Greek political and military affairs. The amount of supplies and assistance that was provided by the British to ELAS, the most important and active resistance organisation, to fight the Germans was relatively limited. The reason for this was that the British did not intend to boost the communist forces but assist resistance to the Germans and keep Greece and South-East Mediterranean under British influence if not full control. By early January 1945, the British presence in Greece included more than 1.300 ranks. They were tasked by Churchill to offer 'advice and assistance' on the organisation, supply and training of the Greek forces. The Mission comprised of Army, Air, Navy and Police divisions to serve all corps of Greek armed and internal security forces (Royal Gendarmerie, Urban Police and Coast Guard).¹⁹

The fighting between regular forces and insurgents in 1946 assigned to the British advisors a major role in military offensives. The changes in British political leadership, with the defeat of Churchill, did not change the anti-Communist role of the British advisors, but saw, also due to many factors, like the exhaustion of military and financial resources, the reduction of role of Britain in the Greek policy-making and the entry in the scene of the US.

As the Americans began their aid programme during 1947, they pressured the British to keep their advisory mission to the Greek forces, while began the arrival of their own in the country, to maintain a united front against the communist threat (the ratio of the British-US military advisors strength was always 3 to 1 in favour of the firsts). While the British advisors role remained pivotal during the entire civil war, the British supply of materiel to the Greek armed forces was limited and was rapidly overrun by the US materiel, which replaced it, only with the remarkable exception of the air combat fighters, which remained massively concentrated of the British-built 'Spitfires'. This change began in 1947 when the governmental forces started to receive an endless line of support of any kind of equipment from the US.

The end of the civil war and joining of Greece to NATO saw the major change in the British military presence, which remained only into the naval sector, while the Atlantic Alliance included the Greek armed forces in the organization's regular programmes of training, supply and structuration and the US remained the major pivot of those programmes. Even reduced,

¹⁸ WOODHOUSE, C. M., 'Early British Contacts with the Greek Resistance in 1942', in *Balkan Studies* 12, no. 2, (1971), pp. 347-354.

¹⁹ WOODHOUSE, C. M., 'The National Liberation Front and the British Connection', in IATRIDES J. O. (ed), *Greece In The 1940s: A Nation In Crisis*, Lebanon (N. Hampshire), UPNE, 1st ed. Aug.1981, pp. 81-101.

British influence was far from negligible during the transitional period between the end of the civil war and Greece's entry into NATO.

British intervention in Greece during the WWII, the Civil War and the first post-Civil War years has been imminent and influential in many ways. This was the result of British intention to fight the enemy, which had the form of the Axis power during the WWII years and communism during the Civil War years. The military role of Britain in developments in Greece has been important and influential on a part with its political intervention. The aim of the BMM (G) was to practice intelligence activities in the area and influence military undertakings. The role of the British Army was to support the EVS to build a new post-war state. Their practices, complicated by the Civil War, evolved around different strategies and tactics against EVS and strengthen Greece's territorial security.

British rationale is justified by timing that key decisions were taken: 1942 brought the BLU in Greece, 1944 the return of British forces in the country, 1949 the withdrawal of the bulk of its forces, and 1952 the withdrawal of the BMM (G). A multi-dimensional type of warfare, which combined political, intelligence and military activities, was used for the first time by combining British, US and Greek government defenders.

The US involvement, as above mentioned, started later and initially was limited and the number of the advisors on the field was small (even few of them die in a flight crash), but was important in the second line, in logistic and training of the Greek forces.

The normalization of the Greek political life (even without the participation of the KKE and that the socialist parties played a minor role in the political arena) after the civil war saw the impressive increase role of the US in the country reaching the highest point, when, in March 1952, the US Embassy intervention changed the electoral law promoting simple majority electoral system and the Parliament votes for simple majority six months later.²⁰

Operation 'Manna' was the code name for a WWII operation carried by the British and Greek forces in Greece in mid-October 1944, following the gradual withdrawal of the German occupying forces from the country. The operation included an initial entry force, represented by an airborne element, which was conducted by the British 2nd Independent Parachute Brigade on 12 October, when elements of the 4th Parachute Battalion parachuted onto the Megara airfield 45 km outside of Athens. The prevailing weather conditions forced the abandonment of further parachute operations and it was not until 14 October that the rest of the brigade, less the 5th Parachute Battalion, arrived. After landing, the 4th and 6th Parachute Battalions marched on Athens. On 16 October, the 5th Battalion and the brigade's glider-borne element arrived. The 2nd Para Brigade was rapidly reinforced by the British 23rd Armoured Brigade, arrived by sea; British force took over rapidly the protection of the city. Royal Navy and Greek ships transported an important amount of British and Greek troops, as well as the Greek government in exile, to Athens, moving them from Italy and Egypt. The British forces, which were transported also to other key part of Greece like Salonika and Corfu, rapidly become an important element of the ground and represented a pivotal factor of the future evolution of the Greek policy.²¹

²⁰ DELAPORTA. E., "The British Role in Greek Political and Military Operations, 1947-1952", PhD dissertation, Department of History, Faculty of Arts, University of Glasgow, Feb. 2003; WITTNER, L., *American Intervention in Greece, 1943-49*, New York, Columbia University Press, , 1982, pp. 232-36; IATRIDES, J. O., 'Britain, the US and Greece, 1945-49' in CLOSE, D. H. (ed.) *The Greek Civil War, 1943-50*, London, Taylor & Francis, 1993, pp. 203, 207; MYERS, E. W. C., *Greek Entanglement*, London, Rupert Hart-Davis Pub., 1st Ed. 1955, pp. 13-96.

²¹ Lt-Gen Scobie, Commander Land Forces Greece (HQ 3rd Corps)

3rd Corps, order of battle 15-17 November 1944 (additional details from second sources, marked with an *):

4th Indian Infantry Division

-HQ and 7th Indian Infantry Brigade (Salonika)

-5th Indian Infantry Brigade (In Italy)

As mentioned, the bitter civil strife that engulfed Greece after Axis forces had been driven from its soil. With the liberation of Greece came not peace but rather open warfare between factions of the Right, represented by the Government, and the Left, the dominant faction of which was the Communist Party.

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- 11th Indian Infantry Brigade (Arriving at Patras)
 - 23rd Armoured Brigade (Athens)
 - 40th RTR (detached at this point and at Tripolis, one presumed they landed in Greece at a later date)
 - 46th RTR*
 - 50th RTR*
 - 11th King's Royal Rifle Corps*
 - 463rd Battery, 104th Royal Horse Artillery (till 15.2.45)*
 - 1238th Field Company, Royal Engineers*
 - 2nd Parachute Brigade Group (Salonika)
 - 4th, 5th * and 6th Parachute Battalions (4th and 6th were detached at this point and at Athens, one presumed the 5th was in Salonika)
 - 330th Airlanding Anti-tank Battery, Royal Artillery*
 - 64th Field Battery, Royal Artillery (till 3.12.44)*
 - 'A' Airlanding Light Battery, Royal Artillery (from 4.12.1944)*
 - 2nd Parachute Squadron, Royal Engineers*
 - 2nd Independent Glider Pilot Squadron*
 - 23rd Independent Parachute Platoon*
 - 3rd Greek Mountain brigade (Athens)
 - 2nd Battalion Highland Light Infantry (Patras)
 - 40th Royal Marine Commando (Corfu)
 - 9th Commando (Salonika)
 - Special Boat Squadron (RN) and Long Range Desert Group, L.F.A (Athens)

Source:

*General Sir William JACKSON, *The Mediterranean and Middle East Volume VI, Victory in the Mediterranean Part III - November 1944 to May 1945*, pp.18, 22 (footnote);*Lt. Colonel JOSLEN, *Orders of Battle*, pp. 171, 409
 2nd Para Brigade left Greece on 28.1.1945 was dispatched to Italy, then onto the UK and was attached to the 6th Airborne Division (JOSLEN, p. 410)

4th Infantry Division arrived in Greece on 13.12.1944 and was attached to 3rd Corps. (JOSLEN, pp. 45, 46)

- 10th Infantry Brigade
- 12th Infantry Brigade
- 28th Infantry Brigade
- 4th Recce Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps
- 22nd, 30th, 77th Field Regiments, Royal Artillery
- 14th Anti-Tank Regiment
- 7th, 9th, 225th Field Companies, Royal Engineers
- 3rd Bridging Platoon, Royal Engineers
- 2nd Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers
- 46th Infantry Division arrived in Greece on 14.1.45, it left on 7.4.45 going back to Italy. (Joslen, pp. 75, 76)
- 128th Infantry Brigade
- 138th Infantry Brigade
- 139th Infantry Brigade (the brigade was reattached to the division 4 days after the division was transferred to Greece, it is not sure if it arrived at the same time as the rest of the division)
- 46th Recce Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps
- 270th, 271st, 272nd Field Park Companies, Royal Engineers
- 201st Bridging Platoon, Royal Engineers
- 70th, 71st, 172nd Field Regiments, Royal Artillery
- 58th Anti-tank Regiment, Royal Artillery
- 9th Battalion, The Manchester Regiment

Cfr. <https://forum.axishistory.com/viewtopic.php?t=161540>, consulted on 30 June 2017; JOSLEN, H. F. *Orders Of Battle. Second World War 1939-45*, London, Naval and Military Press, 1960.

After a truce on January 11, 1945, between the commander of the British forces in Greece, and the Communist leader of ELAS, the fighting was brought to an end on 12 February 1945, by the signing of the Varkiza Agreement.²²

The accord also promised that members of the EAM-ELAS would be permitted to participate in political activities if they surrendered their weapons. In return for surrendering its arms, at the E.A.M. was promised freedom to engage in political activities, and the government guaranteed civil and political liberties and undertook to organize a non-political national army. These commitments were not fulfilled, and the Varkiza Pact was followed by a rightist reaction and widespread persecution of leftist elements.

The Varizka Pact, which followed by one day the publication of the Yalta Declaration on Liberated Europe, in which the US, UK and USSR formally assumed responsibility for assisting liberated nations "to form interim governmental authorities representative of all democratic elements in the population through free elections... and to facilitate where necessary the holding of such elections." The Varkiza Agreement provided for a plebiscite, to determine whether Greece was to be a monarchy or a republic, to be followed by parliamentary elections.²³

The institutional problem, with the dilemma between the monarchy and the republic was another element of the already, deeply polarized and impoverished, Greek population; this was for the Western Allied one major problem for the establishment of a stable and friendly post-war Mediterranean. The problem involved with the similar dilemma going across the close, former invader of Greece, and now co-belligerent, Italy, where again the conservative elements of the populations were in favour of the re-establishment of a monarchical framework, and the more liberal (together with Communists and Socialists) supported the establishment of a republican regime as guarantee of a more inclusive and democratic political landscape.

While the Varkiza Pact ended the open fighting, it did nothing to reconcile the warring factions, and divisions remained deep, touching not only the political dimension but also social and cultural models bear forward by the two sides. The mutual and deep distrust among the two sides led them to the inclusion in the Pact of a provision requesting that the Allied Powers to send observers to monitor the elections and verify their fairness.

Even before the Varkiza Pact, the British and US Ambassadors in Athens, giving the extremely polarized situation in the country, had concluded that only impartial observers would be a key element if the Greeks were to arrive at any resolution of their problems, and they communicated to their respective governments the suggestion that an international commission be formed to monitor the plebiscite, which at that time was to precede the elections. The Varkiza Pact led to negotiations between the Greek Government and the Governments of the US and UK, and later with those of France and USSR.

²² The Treaty of Varkiza (also known as the Varkiza Pact or the Varkiza Peace Agreement) was signed in Varkiza (near Athens) on February 12, 1945 between the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) for EAM-ELAS.

One of the aspects of the accord (Article IX) called for a plebiscite to be held within the year in order to resolve any problems with the Greek Constitution. This plebiscite would help establish elections and thus create a constituent assembly that would draft a new organic law. In another aspect of the treaty, both signatories agreed that the Allies send overseers in order to verify the validity of the elections.

²³ The two delegations were composed: Greek Government: Ioannis Sofianopoulos, Minister for Foreign Affairs; Periklis Rallis, Ministry of the Interior; General Pafsanias Katsotas, Military Advisor; for the left-wing forces: Georgios Siantos, Secretary-General of the KKE; Ilias Tsirimokos, Secretary-General of the Socialist Party of Greece; Dimitrios Partsalidis, Secretary of the Central Committee of EAM; 'General' Stefanos Sarafis, Military Advisor of EAM

The Governments of UK, France, and the US announced on 19 September 1945, that they had accepted the Greek Government's invitation to send observers. Moscow, however, refused to participate on the grounds that it was opposed in principle to the supervision of national elections by foreign countries.²⁴

The Greek Government had by now concluded that the elections should precede the plebiscite, perhaps as early as that autumn. But the previous 10-year disruption of normal Greek life had taken its toll, and the realization that the compilation of voter lists—the last having been compiled in 1935—would be more difficult than anticipated led to a series of postponements of the election. Finally, the elections were set for 31 March 1946.

During the early stages of planning, the proposed organization of Allied observers was unofficially designated the Allied Mission for Observing Greek Elections. This was officially supplanted by the Allied Mission to Observe the Greek Elections. First designations, like first impressions, tend to be lasting, and so it is that veterans of the Mission, and even the Mission's final report, refer to the organization as AMFOGE.²⁵

The heads of AMFOGE's delegations/contingents were the Ambassador Henry F. Grady (USA) R. T. Windle (UK, a National Agent for Labour Party, choose for his vast electoral experience background), and Gen. Arnaud Laparra (France).²⁶

The military planning staff was headed by an US military, the Major-General Harry J. Malony, and comprised mainly US personnel with limited representatives from Great Britain and France AMFOGE's strength at the outset of operations was 1,155, of which the US provided 601 military and 91 civilian personnel; the French 164 military and 5 civilians; and Great Britain 273 military and 21 civilians.

London solicited the involvement of Commonwealth participation, but only South Africa chose to participate. The nature of the Mission was a mixed civil-military organization, with a predominant military fashion, not only because led, on the ground, by a US Army General, but also because all the personnel, regardless their status, was in uniform, provided by US Army warehouses. The majority of the US contingent were individuals who were serving in units then in the Mediterranean and who lacked sufficient points for return to the States.

In developing its operational plan, AMFOGE stressed two points. First, the mission was civil, not military. The use of military personnel reflected the Mission's belief that operating conditions would be difficult, that the training and organization of military personnel would permit quicker adaptability to the work, and because a large pool of competent personnel, many with civil affairs experience, was available in the ranks of the military. Second, it was emphasized that the undertaking would truly be an Allied venture, that decisions would be determined by AMFOGE as a unit, and that a joint report would be produced.

The main body of AMFOGE assembled in Naples in February 1946 for a period of indoctrination and training. The training included map reading, physical training, first aid, and instruction in vehicle operation and maintenance. The indoctrination included an intense crash course in the history, geography, and politics of Greece, along with an orientation to AMFOGE's mission. Each national delegation (called contingent) conducted its training program separately, but the timing and content of the programs were carefully coordinated.

As relatively few of its personnel spoke Greek, AMFOGE found it necessary to recruit interpreters. Most of the interpreters recruited by the French contingent were Greek-speaking French citizens. The US and British delegations carefully screened volunteers from the Greek populace to act as interpreters. The screening process was not simply one of assessing language skills; of equal importance was eliminating those individuals who possessed such

²⁴ It was widely held belief at the time was that the Soviets chose not to participate for fear that if they did it might open the door to outside observers for elections scheduled to take place in Poland later that year.

²⁵ *Report of the Mission To Observe The Greek Elections*, US Department of State Publication 2522, April 1946.

²⁶ Press Release Issued by the US Department of State, 14 January 1946.

strong political leanings as to bias their translations or whose employment might leave the Mission open to charges of partiality. Eventually, the services of 270 interpreters were retained.

Divided into 240 three-man observation teams (officer/observer, enlisted man/driver, translator), personnel dispersed through the five operational districts—Athens, Herakleion, Tripolis, Patras, and Salonika—to conduct the Mission's business. During the pre-election period, AMFOGE focused on monitoring the registration process, conducting surveys of the populace, and investigating complaints of intimidation; this was followed by observing the polling process on election day; and afterwards monitoring the counting of ballots.²⁷

Operating in the remote districts was not without its hardships. Were prohibited nighttime travels and/or activities because the presence of brigands and other irregular outlaw groups.²⁸ Thus, each team travelled with sufficient provisions they could stay overnight where they were if they were unable to complete the return trip to their own HQ during daylight. The terrain was so difficult in some mountain areas that even the Germans had not penetrated them, and the inhabitants greeted the teams with great surprise.

AMFOGE monitored the parliamentary election of 31 March 1946, which saw the victory of the center-rights parties, also due to the boycott of the KKE, and the institutional plebiscite of 1 September (which sealed the return of the King and the defeat of the republican option).

AMFOGE's final report states that the votes were orderly and without significant voting fraud; that while there were examples of intimidation, from both political extremes elements, their impact had no significant effect on the outcome. Overall, the report concluded, the elections were free and fair, and the results were a true reflection of the will of the Greek population.

A typical problem of every observation (and/or neutral) mission is their members, vehicles and facilities should be identified easily. Especially in Greece, with the rapidly growing presence of Allied personnel, appeared imperative that the members of the Commission to be seen as different, as much as possible, to the other foreign presence and reduce any possible misunderstanding with the local population. In order to facilitate the identification of the personnel of the Mission, by the local actors, an *ad hoc* sleeve patch was authorized for wear by members of the three of AMFOGE contingents. Initially, the US Army was hesitant to authorize a SSI for a unit that would exist for a very short period. But, given the importance and the international flavor of AMFOGE's mission, it was approved. The basic SSI depicts an owl (a symbol of wisdom) embroidered in blue on a central white field with a red border. Embroidered in white in the red border vertically flanking the owl are the words *Papathphths* and *Eklogwn* (observer of elections). Above the basic SSI, each contingent wore its own white on red tab: *Amepikh* (America), *Agglia* (Britain), and *Gallia* (France). Those acting as interpreters wore a brassard bearing the SSI and a *Diepmhneys* (interpreter). Additionally, special ID cards were issued to the personnel of the Mission.

²⁷ It appears that 'Life' magazine covered AMFOGE's activities, but there are no evidence of it; surely it was reported by military camera teams and broadcasted in movie theatres and lately, as part documentaries by TV broadcasting documentaries over the Greek recent history and there is a large amount of pictures of the members of the Mission.

²⁸ Although AMFOGE's vehicles were prominently identified, there was nothing distinctive about their headlights, which made an inviting target at night.

Chapter 4

The UN prelude: the Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents and the Subsidiary Group

It is a matter of fact that the years between 1940 and 1950 were a real nightmare for Greece. In 1945, despite many difficulties, while Europe started the rehabilitation after six years of destructive war, Greece stepped in another season of troubles and horrors.

This war was even more vicious than the previous one which opposed the Greek people against Italians, Germans, Bulgarians and local collaborationists. The legacy of war, occupation and resistance had a heavy cost for the population, which suffered the loss of 10 per cent of the pre-war level, one of the highest of the entire conflict, and as well for the country with the 25 per cent of buildings destroyed and the 75 per cent of the forests.

But it should not be forgot that, already during the foreign occupation, the differences between resistance movements led to the so-called 'first civil war', involving leftist-republicans and rightist-monarchists.

At the end of war, despite the (apparent) unification of the struggle against the foreign invasion, the pre-war economic, political and social divisions and weakness remained and were amplified at their extreme and fall the country in a new, bitter, war, starting from the dilemma monarchy or republic, between right wing and left wing.

The irreconcilable divisions between the Greeks who support the entrance of the country in the Soviet area of influence and the ones who want to kept the country within the Western political, economic and social model remained a large, long, blood line which crossed the recent history and the society of the country, of which the most visible example was the coup which kept the country on the margin of Western Europe between 1967 and 1974, under a brutal military dictatorship.

This new war was one of the first, and among the bloodiest, confrontations between the two-blocks built around the power and influence of USA and USSR, which marked the history of Europe and of the world between the end of WWII and the fall of Berlin Wall.

Between this conflict, the UN displayed the first field activity and this experiment, because was it, ran for a number of years representing a significant effort for a still embryonic organization, which was established only one year before.

UNSCOB, and then the Sub Commission, which this work focuses, were preceded by another *ad hoc* body, the UN Security Council's Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents.

But the Greek problem was the first issue brought before the United Nations in 1946 (3 December) and remained one of the most persistent issues facing the organization since the establishment (November 1945), but the issue of Greece was already present in the debate and political arena. Already in January 1946 the UN Security Council rejected a Soviet-backed resolution calling the presence of British forces in Greece (in the country since 4 October 1944 within 'Operation Manna') as a threat to international peace.

As mentioned, the Greek issue was among the first submitted to the attention of the UN and was lighted up by a complaint filed by USSR against Greece at the UNSC (by Andrey Gromyko, then Soviet Perm. Rep. and later Foreign Minister).²⁹

²⁹ The document, which carefully reflected the instructions and guidelines of Andrei Vyshinsky (then Deputy Foreign Minister of Moscow) had four constituent points:

A) the extremely tense situation in Greece has been created which is fraught with serious consequences, either for the Greek people and for the maintenance of peace and security;

Vyshinski rejected as misguided, and implicitly stating originated by London, the Athens government's statement that the British forces were on the Greek soil at its own request and further stressed that, whereas the USSR had previously approved the presence of British troops in Greece to oppose the Germans, their continued presence in the country was unacceptable. Vyshinsky quoted addresses of British MPs indicating that their belief that British policy in Greece was encouraging the establishment (or re-establishment) of the fascism in the country. The British case was put by Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary (Minister level), who referred to the atrocities of the communist partisans and to the request of the Greek government for assistance against communist attempts to acquire the power by the use of force.

Also the Ambassador Thanassis Aghnides, the Greek Perm. Rep.,³⁰ stressed the same points of Bevin and submitted to the UNSC a detailed memorandum on this issue prepared by the Greek Constitutional Committee of Foreign Affairs. The US, at that moment, were cautious to not to disrupt the relations with Moscow, and adopted a moderate stance on the Greek issue, even supporting the presence of British troops there. Edward Stettinius, the first US Perm. Rep. at the UN, in a short statement urged the UNSC to not to adopt any resolution, in either favour or Moscow or London positions.

Stettinius stance precipitated some maneuvering, leaving the door open to Vyshinski who suggested that there should be merely be a statement that in 'in view of the British Government declaration that the its troops would be withdrew from Greece as soon as possible, this question may be regarded at the present meeting as exhausted'. Bevin, in principle agreed but was not committal.³¹

After other proposals were made by Poland and Egypt, leading the UNSC in a procedural quagmire. After a protracted debate, all parties agreed that the matter could be closed with a statement of the President of the Council, which took note and mention of all the views. Both Britain and USSR were in a way defeated; the first failed into including that the British troops were in Greece on the request by Athens government and where not a danger to peace; the Soviets failed in inserting a clause that would refer to London' promise to withdraw the British troops as soon as possible.

On 24 August 1946 the Greek issue come back at the UNSC. This time was Ukraine (a USSR-clone state) who asked to discuss generally the situation in Balkans in the light of the number of incidents, which occurred at the borders of Greece with Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Albania. It should be recalled that at the Peace Conference in Paris, Athens launched the old claims over North Epirus (or South Albania, as called by Tirana) and in that borders were recorded a peak of fire trade. The delimitation of the borders between Albania and Greece was a bitter contentious since the Balkan wars, after WWI ran even harshly with the involvement of Great Powers and originated a lot of tension, like the incident at the 'Tellini Commission' of August 1923.³²

B) The presence of British troops in Greece is not dictated by necessity, since they are not there to protect the communications of British troops stationed in defeated countries;

C) The presence of British troops in Greece has in fact become a means of exerting pressure on the internal affairs of that country;

D) This circumstance is frequently used by reactionary elements in Greece against the democratic forces in the country. Cfr. SCRO, 1st year, 1st ser., p. 74)

³⁰ Previously Assistant Secretary-General of the League of Nations and later Chairman of ACABQ.

³¹ "To leave it as Mr. Vyshinsky put it means in fact his claims is established, and that as a result of the discussion I agree to withdraw British troops. Well, really I am not so childish as to fall for that. I am really not" Cfr. SCRO, 1st year, 1st ser., p. 119.

³² The Ukrainian SSR telegram to the UNSC President stated: 'In recent times and especially since the opening of the Peace Conference in Paris, as a result of the irresponsible policy of the present Greek Government [a dangerous situation had arisen]... The cause of the concern is above all due to the numerous border incidents on

Great Britain and the Netherlands were cold into the inclusion of the Ukrainian request in the Council agenda, while the US were more conciliator and a debate took place and Greece and Ukraine were invited to present their views. Ukraine enlarged the allegations against Greece including the arguments already discussed in the debate at the Council in January.

The Greek Perm. Rep. strongly rejected the allegations, underlining the Albanian provocations and the anti-Greek campaign in the Yugoslavian press. Sir Alexander Cadogan, the British Perm. Rep., stated that Greece's claims to Northern Epirus was a long-standing one and the submission of it at the Paris Conference was a proper procedure and not a threat to the international peace. Cadogan concluded saying that move of the Ambassador Dmitry Manuisky (the Ukrainian Perm. Rep.) was a mere repetition of what happened in January.³³

Later, a vote was taken as to allowing Albania (at time, together with Bulgaria, not member of the UN) to put its view. Great Britain, which had already clashes with Albania earlier that year over the Corfu channel issue, was the only vote against at the Council.³⁴

The Albanian delegation was invited and there was a prolonged and bitter exchange of allegation between Tirana in one side and London and Athens in the other; the agenda of the allegations was enlarged also to the presence of the British troops in Greece and to the fairness of the institutional plebiscite which allowed the return of the monarchy in the country.

Australia prepared a draft resolution which would have discussed by the Council later, while the Soviet delegation proposed resolution was very aggressive against Greece and, indirectly, against the British.³⁵

The US proposed that the Council should further examine the borders situation in the region of the Balkans, arguing that it was undeniable that the situation along Greece's northern border was a source of problems and that the Council should examine the situation also of the relations between Greece and Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, and not only with Albania. The US suggested also that the situation of minorities required an examination by the Council.

Cadogan asked time to consult his government on this proposal.³⁶ (8)

the Greek-Albanian border, which are provoked by the Greek armed units with the connivance and the encouragement of the Greek authorities... [They intend to provoke] an armed conflict with Albania which would serve as a pretext for the wresting of the southern part of Albania in favour of Greece. Moreover, the atmosphere is rendered still more tense by the repeated statements of representatives of the present Greek Government in their public speeches and in the press as well from the rostrum of the Peace Conference in Paris regarding the alleged state of war between Greece and Albania. ...' Cfr. S/137, SCOR, 1st yr., 2nd ser., suppl. 5, Annex 8

³³ Cfr. SCOR, 1st yr., 2nd sr., 61st mtg., p. 245.

³⁴ The Corfu Channel Incident consists of three separate events involving Royal Navy ships in the Channel of Corfu, which took place in 1946; the first in 15 May, the second on 22 October and the third one between 12 and 13 November. It widely is considered an early episode of the Cold War. During the first incident, Royal Navy ships came under fire from Albanian fortifications. The second incident involved Royal Navy ships striking mines, allegedly laid down by Albanian forces, and the third incident occurred when the Royal Navy conducted mine-clearing operations in the Corfu Channel, but in Albanian territorial waters, and Albania complained about them to the United Nations. This series of incidents led to the Corfu Channel case, where the United Kingdom brought a case against the People's Republic of Albania to the International Court of Justice. The Court rendered a decision under which Albania was to pay £844,000 to the United Kingdom (£26.9 million in 2015 terms). Because of the incidents, Britain, in 1946, broke off talks with Albania aimed at establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries. Diplomatic relations were only restored in 1990.

³⁵ In fact, the resolution was calling for the 'immediate cessation of the provocative activities of the aggressive monarchist elements' on the Greek-Albanian border and an end to the 'agitation regarding the state of war existing between Greece and Albania... and the persecution of national minorities in Greece'. Cfr. SCOR, 1st yr., 2nd sr., 70th mtg., p. 408.

³⁶ Stettinius rejected the inclusion of the Greek claims on Northern Epirus as a proper question for the Council matter, thus giving that it was already raised at the Paris Peace Conference; he stressed that Yugoslavian claims for a 'friendly' Macedonia and Bulgarian claims about Thrace to Greece [the region of Kavalla] at the Paris

The Council (at time formed by 11 Member States, of which 5 permanent with the right of veto [USA, UK, Republic of China, USSR, France]) rejected the Soviet-proposed resolution (only USSR and Poland voted in favour). The US-proposed resolution, which would have established a three-man commission to investigate border incidents between Greece and Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia received eight votes in favour but also the Soviet veto (20 September 1946). Also the Netherlands proposal for a resolution which would have called all the parties, without specific mention, to avoid any further incident at the borders, was rejected.

1946 saw again the involvement of the UN following the degradation of the security situation in Greece, due to persistent clashes at the borders and the continuous call of KKE for the withdrawal of British troops there and an end to the 'fascist' activities of the Greek government, in this supported by the press campaigns of the other Communist Parties in France, Italy and other USSR-controlled countries. Further, London sought to involve in the file the US in a sharing of its burdens in Greece through an economic aid that the British government could not more afford and ensure to the Greek government to walk out from the bitter post-war financial crisis.

After the Soviet veto at the Council, every week, and for six times, the Greek government notified to the Secretary-General, the new installed Trygve Lie, about the incidents that occurred at the borders with Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. On 3 December 1946 the Greek government requested a meeting of the Council to organize an investigation over it.

The request was corroborated by a memorandum, dated 25 November, with a detailed list of border violations occurred in the previous three months.

The Council, seeing a quick change of the Soviet position, on 19 December voted unanimously the Resolution 15 (1946) that established the 'Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents'. The new stance of USSR indicated that the establishment of the Commission was an action decided at the discretion of the 5 Permanents, who acted jointly and not an answer to the Greeks complaints.³⁷

Conference were not considered potential threats to peace. Cfr. SCOR, 1st yr., 2nd sr., 68th mtg., pp. 366-8, pp. 386-8.

³⁷ Whereas, there have been presented to the Security Council oral and written statements by the Greek, Yugoslav, Albanian and Bulgarian Governments relating to the disturbed conditions in northern Greece along the frontier between Greece on the one hand and Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia on the other, which conditions, in the opinion of the Council should be investigated before the Council, should be investigated before the Council attempts to reach any conclusions regarding the issues involved.

Resolves:

That the Security Council under Article 34 of the Charter establish a Commission of Investigation to ascertain the facts relating to the alleged border violations along the frontier between Greece on the one hand and Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia on the other.

That the Commission shall be composed of a representative of each of the members of the Security Council as it will be constituted in 1947.

That the Commission shall be proceed to the area not later than January 15, 1947, and shall submit to the Security Council at the earliest possible date a report of the facts disclosed by the investigation. The Commission shall, if it deems it advisable or if requested by the Security Council, make preliminary reports to the Security Council.

That the Commission shall have the authority to conduct its investigation in northern Greece and such places in other parts of Greece, in Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia as the Commission considers should be included in its investigation in order to elucidate the causes and nature of the above-mentioned border violations and disturbances.

That the Commission shall have authority to call upon the Governments, officials and nationals of those countries, as well as such other sources as the Commission deems necessary for information relevant to its investigation.

That the Security Council request the Secretary-General to communicate with the appropriate authorities of the countries named above in order to facilitate the Commission's investigation in those countries.

The Commission, which composition remind the structure of the similar bodies set up by the recently closed down League of Nations, was composed by nationals (diplomats, experts in several fields) from Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Republic of China, Colombia, France, Poland, Syria, the USSR, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia, as requested by the UNSCR 15 (1946), appointed liaison officers to serve with the Commission.

The Commission assembled in Athens on 29 January 1947 and established a second operating office in Salonika. Altogether, the Commission 99 meetings in Athens (32), Salonika (28), Sofia (6), Belgrade (7), Geneva (12) and New York (14) till mid-July.

Since the beginning, emerge as critical the relations with the Greek government. Discussions were focused on the competence of the Commission to request informally and in confidential way, to suspend the executions of death sentences of people allegedly involved in the armed action against the government forces. Due to lack of internal unanimity, the Commission submitted the issue to the Council, in the light of the terms of the UNSCR 15 (1946) which allowed the Commission to call any national who might assist the Commission with information relevant to its mandate (the Greek Government was informed too on this issue).

On 7 February, Greece made public its protest against the interference of the Commission in the domestic affairs of the country, contrary according to the Athens government, to the spirit and the letter of the Article 2, Paragraph 7 of the Charter of the United Nations and the terms of reference of the Commission.

The Council discussed the problem on 19 February and made a compromise declaration stating that the Commission was not empowered to ask to states(s) authorities to postpone executions of any persons sentences to death unless the Commission had reasons to believe that examination of any such person as witness would assist the Commission in its work. On that basis the Commission was able to interview 14 peoples.

Deserve to be mentioned that the US, while realizing the necessity to move the Greek issue under UNGA framework to block the largely foreseeable Soviet veto, try to prolong the life of the Commission of the Inquiry with a *démarche* proposing to the establishment of a 'Subsidiary Group'.

A request from the US delegation asking to include the Greek question in the agenda was included in the agenda of the Council meeting on 28 March 1947. At the meeting the US delegate said that the Commission should continue its work, including investigations along the border, until the Council clearly solve the Greek case. The US also requested that the Commission, in order to finalize the report should seat in New York and keep available for the Council until it complete its consideration of the Greece case.

The reason behind the request, was according to the US, that the incoming approach of the spring season would increase the infiltration of Communist (Greek and foreigners) fighters in Greece. For the US delegation was of the utmost importance that an international, neutral and impartial presence remain in the areas of northern Greece and provide at the Commission, and then to the Council, any update of the situation there.

The US presented a draft resolution, amended by France, where there was request that the Commission leave one of its three members (and supporting staff) in the area, and naming

That each representative on the Commission be entitled to select the personnel necessary to assist him and that, in addition, the Security Council request the Secretary-General to provide such staff and assistance to the Commission, as it deems necessary for the prompt and effective fulfillment of its tasks.

That a representative of the Government of Greece, Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia be invited to assist to the work of the Commission in a liaison capacity.

That the Commission be invited to make any proposals that it may deem wise for averting a repetition of border violations and disturbances in these areas.

Cfr. [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/15\(1946\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/15(1946)), consulted on 1 July 2017

this as 'Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents – Subsidiary Group', while the other members of the Commission should move to Geneva first, and later to New York, in order to finalize the report and remain at the disposal of the Council.

Also the USSR, understanding that the US demarche would prelude another path for the Greek question, entered in the arena, proposing that an ad hoc committee should be set up to ensure that the help given to Greece should be used 'exclusively in the interest of the Greek people'.

On 18 April 1947, the Council approved (9 in favor, Poland against and USSR abstaining) adopted the UNSC Resolution 23 (1947) (as amended by France), establishing the Subsidiary Group and de facto, prolong the life of the Commission, as demanded by the US.

Later, seeing the developments of the UN involvement in the Greek case, appear clear that the Subsidiary Group paved the way to the establishment of UNSCOB, which consolidate the Western-wise view on the file and confirmed the hostility of the Soviet bloc with the UN.³⁸ The members of the Subsidiary Group left Geneva on 6 May 1947 to Salonika to begin (or continue) their work.

A code cable (5 May) from the Chairman of the Commission to the President of the Council, which reported the refusal of the governments of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to appoint liaison officers to the Commission, revealed the incoming political, legal and operational problems of Subsidiary Group works.

Two days after, with a clear coordinated maneuver, the USSR Perm. Rep. asked, with a letter to the President of the Council to include the Greek case in the agenda of the meeting planned for 12 May.

At the meeting, the Soviet representative repeated the objections already formulated to the idea of the Commission and called the attention to, according to him, the impossibility the transfer of the functions of the Commission to the Subsidiary Group, stressing that it would happened the Subsidiary Group will loose all meaning. For the Soviet diplomat, the Subsidiary Group would not, in the reality, a sub entity of the Commission, but a separate and, brand new, investigation body. In other words, he said, that there would be two entities, which each carried out a parallel work, in violation of the spirit and the letter of the Resolution which established the Commission. Further, he concluded that the Commission adopted a resolution regarding the powers and functions of the Subsidiary Group without the participation of the representatives of Bulgaria, Albania and Yugoslavia, an unacceptable situation.

After the strong statement of the USSR representative, it was decided that the Commission should appear in New York to present its report to the Council. At other meetings of the Council, delegates of Yugoslavia, Albania and Bulgaria spoke strongly against the terms of reference of the Subsidiary Group, echoing the words of the Soviet diplomat. Giving the

³⁸ *Resolved*, that pending a new decision of the Security Council, the Commission, established by the resolution of the Council of December 19, 1946, shall maintain in the area concerned a subsidiary group composed of a representative of each of the members of the Commission to continue to fulfill such functions as the Commission may prescribe in accordance with its terms of reference.

In pursuance of the resolution of the Security Council, the Commission of Investigation established a Subsidiary Group with headquarters in Salonika on April 30, composed of a representative of each of the members of the Commission. The terms of reference of the Subsidiary Group were those set out in the resolution of the Security Council of December 19, 1946, with the following qualifications:

1) it was to investigate such incidents as might be brought to its attention which had occurred since March 22, 1947:

2) it was not to hear evidence which had been or could have been available to the main Commission:

3) no incident was to be investigated nor evidence heard except by formal decision of the Subsidiary Group.

Cfr. [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/23\(1947\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/23(1947)) , consulted on 1 July 2017)

stalemate and the lack of minimal unanimity, the President of the Council decided to postpone further discussion on the Greek question until the report of the Commission was submitted to Council.

In its report to the Council, submitted on 27 June 1947, the Commission by majority (8 votes in favor, France abstained and Poland and USSR against) declared that Yugoslavia, and at a lesser extent, Albania and Bulgaria, supported the communist insurgency in Greece. The Soviet and the Polish delegates in their minority documents stressed that the problems in Greece were originated by the persecution of the Greek government against its 'democratic-minded citizens' and labelled the allegation of interferences in the domestic affairs of Greece by Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria as absolutely unfounded. Also the presence of British troops in Greece was criticized by the Polish and the Soviet delegates.³⁹

The Commission made several conclusions to the Council: recommended that the Council that the parties should work for the reconciliation, the conclusion of border agreements, repatriation of refugees and the voluntary transfer of minorities.

However, reflecting the fluctuant situation on the northern borders of Greece, the Commission recommended that the Council should establish an *ad hoc* body tasked to investigate and resolve the borders violations on the Greek frontiers. This body should be assisted by a monitoring and observers group, which should report on the situation on the ground.

The proposals of the Commission fall in a now already deeply divided Council (and other Member States equally divided on the opposite lines of the Cold War at the General Assembly). Especially, the delegates of the Soviet bloc or sympathetic countries (as well as the pro-Communist dailies in the world) repeated the position of the USSR and Polish delegations in the Commission and strongly dismissed the validity of the Commission work and the genuineness of the witnesses (which were in majority against the Communist stance).

Those were labelled war criminals, traitors, quislings or mercenaries put under psychological pressure and physical tortures by the Greek Government only to allow the West to blame the socialists' states. It should be noted too that the judgement of the claims of Greece against Albania as an element of increasing the tension in the region, were not welcomed by Athens government.

Also the proposal of the establishment of another *ad hoc* body tasked to investigate the border situation was perceived by the socialist states as an unacceptable attempt to re-present the Subsidiary Group work, even within a more larger mandate and structure.⁴⁰

³⁹ UN, Security Council, *Report by the Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents to the Security Council*, 3. Volls., UN Document S/360, 27 May 1947, New York, UN Library, 1947.

⁴⁰ The majority of the Commission concluded:

(1) that Yugoslavia and, to a lesser extent, Albania and Bulgaria had supported the guerrilla warfare in Greece;

(2) that Bulgaria and Yugoslavia were supporting the separatist movement among the Slavo-Macedonian in Greece with a view to incorporating Macedonia in the Yugoslav Federation;

(3) that frontier violations not connected with guerrilla activities were deliberately provoked either by Greece or its northern neighbors and that the incidents themselves were not evidence of aggressive intentions on the part of any of the countries concerned but showed that strained relations existed between them;

(4) that there was a general condition of unrest in Greece as whole, which though not amounting to a state of civil war, helped to explain the situation investigated by the Commission; and (5) that the continued reiteration of Greek territorial claims against Bulgaria and the latter's claim to Western Thrace as well Greece's claims against Albania tended to increase the tension between the countries concerned.

The minority (USSR and Poland) considered that the evidence cited by the majority was contradictory and inconclusive, and they challenged the reliability of the witnesses who had testified on behalf of Greece. They charged that these witnesses included Fascist collaborators and criminals, and that threats, torture and blackmail had been used by the Greek authorities to obtain appropriate statements for the Commission. The charges that Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria supported Greek guerrilla were entirely unfounded, the minority concluded, as

The report of the Commission, according to the view of the US and UK, should pave the way for a further step in the direction to establish a UN-led monitoring mechanism along the Greek northern frontiers.

But also it appeared clear, politically speaking, in consideration of the position of the Polish and Soviet delegates in the Commission and in the Council, that there were very limited chances that the Council would adopt the Commission recommendations. Although, according to the UN Charter, the Council has the sole authority to adopt mandatory resolutions, the repeated Soviet veto of the proposal to establish an ad hoc body tasked to investigate the border violations in Greece let open the door to move the file within the General Assembly framework.

This happened in another important shift of the US policy in the Balkans/Eastern Mediterranean policies. Initially, the US were reluctant to create further tensions with USSR, then progressively facing the ever more aggressive stance of Stalin realized that only a firm opposition would repeal the Soviet offensive. But, in the case of Greece the US initially was willing to assist the country in the resolution of its internal and economic problems, but had little desire to become involved in its external affairs, especially regarding the Balkan countries.

The Truman administration was more in favour not only in a more direct intervention, but also in strong support of the massive involvement of the UN in the Greek's border issue, using the international organization as auxiliary tool in the global confrontation against the USSR.

Despite the not positive landscape, the US made the last attempt at the Council to push for the establishment of the monitoring body. A failure of it would originated a good justification for

were the charges that Bulgaria and Yugoslavia supported separatist movements in Greek Macedonia. Disorders were taking place not only in northern district of Greece, but there was a civil war also in the central and southern provinces. The cause of these disturbed conditions, in the minority's view, was the persecution and terrorism carried out by the Greek authorities against the democratic elements and the national minorities, as well as Greece's expansionist policies in relation to its northern neighbors.

The majority of the Commission of Investigation proposed that the Security Council should recommend to the Government of Greece, on one hand, and Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, on the other, to do their utmost to establish normal good neighborly relations and to abstain from all action, direct or indirect, which was likely to increase and maintain the tension and unrest in the border area, and rigorously to refrain from any support, overt or covert, of elements in neighboring countries aiming at the overthrow of the lawful governments of those countries. Future cases of support of armed bands, formed on the territory of one state and crossing into the territory of another state, or of refusal of a government in spite of the demands of the state concerned to take all possible measures on its own territory to deprive such bands of any aid or protection, should be considered by the Security Council, the Commission of Investigation recommended, as a threat to peace within the meaning of the Charter of the United Nations. The Commission recommended the conclusion of new frontier conventions among the four countries along the lines of the Greco-Bulgarian convention of 1931.

For the purpose of restoring normal conditions along Greece's northern frontiers the majority of the Commission of Investigation recommended that the Council should appoint a small commission or a single commissioner to investigate any frontier violations which might occur, as well to assist the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia in settling controversies arising from frontier violations, in the negotiation of frontier conventions, and in the settlement of the refugee and minority problems.

The representatives of Poland and the USSR objected to the majority recommendations on the ground that they did not proceed from the facts gathered by the Commission in the course of its investigation, but were based on the unfounded assertions of the Greek Government regarding aid to the guerrilla by the northern neighbors of Greece, and ignored the fact that the tense situation and disorders in Greece were due to internal causes. The establishment of a commission such as proposed by the majority of the Commission of Investigation constituted an infringement upon the sovereignty of the states concerned. The proposed measure could not improve the situation, and by ignoring the real causes of the disturbed situation in Greece would aggravate further the existing difficulties. In particular, the proposal ignored foreign military intervention in the internal affairs of Greece represented by the presence of British troops and the United States military aid. Cfr. *Yearbook of the UN 1947-1948*, pp. 338-9.

the US plans to move the Greece issue to the General Assembly, considered much easier to manage for a more favourable balance of state pro-Western (or anti-USSR) and that the USSR could use the veto.

In this light the US presented a very long and articulated draft resolution by which the Council would approve the majority of the proposals of the Commission of Investigation, including that on the establishment of an observer commission, considered by Washington the pillar element of the proposal, together with other draconian measures, especially for the refugees.⁴¹

⁴¹ The Security Council,

Having primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace by virtue of Article 24 of the [UN] Charter, and having considered the report submitted by the Commission of Investigation established by the Council's resolution of 19 December 1946,

Finds that a dispute exists, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. The Security Council therefore, following proposals made by the majority of the Commission of Investigation,

Resolves that:

1) The Security Council recommend to the Governments of Greece, on the one hand, and Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia on the other, to establish as soon as possible normal good-neighborly relations, to abstain from all action, direct or indirect, which may be likely to increase or to maintain the tension and the unrest in the border areas, and rigorously to refrain from any support of elements in neighboring countries aiming at the overthrow of the lawful Government of those countries.

Giving support to armed bands formed in any of the four States concerned and crossing into the territory of another State, or refusal by any one of the four Governments in spite of demands of the States concerned to take the necessary measures on its own territory to deprive such bands of any aid or protection, shall be avoided by the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Yugoslavia as a threat to the peace within the meaning of the Chart of the United Nations,

2) The Security Council recommends that the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia establish, as soon as possible, normal diplomatic relations among themselves.

3) The Security Council recommends to the Governments concerned that they enter into frontier conventions providing for effective machinery for the regulation and control of their common frontiers, and for the pacific settlement of frontier incidents and disputes.

4) As the presence of refugees in any of the four countries is a disturbing factor, the Security Council recommends to the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia that they:

(1) Remove such refugees as far from the country from which they came as is practically possible;

(2) Segregate them in camps or otherwise;

(3) take effective measures to prevent their participation in any political or military activity;

The Security Council recommends that such camps be placed under the supervision of some international body authorized by the United Nations to undertake the task. In order to ensure that only genuine refugees return to their country of origin, repatriation shall not take place except after arrangement with the Government of the country of origin and after notification to the commission established under this resolution, or to the international body authorized for this task by the United Nations.

5. The Security Council recommends to the Governments of Greece on the one hand and Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia on the other, that they study the practicability of concluding agreements for the voluntary transfer of minorities. Until such agreements come into force, individuals belonging to a given minority in any of the countries concerned desiring to emigrate should be given all the facilities to do so by the Governments of the State in which they reside. The arrangements for any transfers under this paragraph should be supervised by the commission established under this resolution, which would act as registration authority for any person desiring to emigrate.

6. The Security Council, for the purpose of restoring normal conditions along the frontiers between Greece on the one hand, and Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia on the other, and thereby assisting these countries in carrying out the recommendations of this resolution, establishes a commission as a subsidiary organ,

(a) The commission shall be composed by one representative of each of the nations members of the Security Council as they may be from time to time.

(b) The functions of the commission shall be those of conciliation and investigation:

(1) To use its good offices to assist the Governments concerned in the negotiation and conclusion of the frontier conventions recommended under this resolution;

The Soviets also submitted their own draft proposal, which would have asserted Greece blames for the incidents on the borders; further the ideological element of the draft resolution included the condemn of the 'anti-democratic foreign intervention' in the country and demand the withdrawal of foreign troops (read: British) and recommended the Greek government take steps to protect national minorities and urged the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Greece and its northern neighbors.

The Council discussed the Commission report and the proposals. Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, in line with the Moscow's draft resolution rejected it and added that the establishment of the commission could only be done under the terms of the Chapter VII of the Charter;⁴² but for them there were no threats to the peace and it would be illegal and against the sovereignty of the states concerned.

(2) To study and make recommendations to the Governments concerned with respect to such additional bilateral agreements between them for the pacific settlement of disputes relating frontier incidents or conditions on the frontier, as the commission considers desirable;

(3) To assist in the implementation of the recommendations made to the four Governments under this resolution with respect to refugees; to receive reports from the four Governments with the respect to persons who may cross or have crossed from the territory of any such to any others; to maintain a register for its confidential use of all such persons and to assist in the repatriation of those who wish to return to their homes: and in connection with these functions to act in concert with the appropriate agency of the United Nations;

(4) To assist the Government concerned in the negotiation and conclusion of arrangements for the transfer of minorities recommended to such Governments under this resolution, and in this connexion to supervise such transfers and to act as a registration authority for any persons desiring to emigrate;

(5) To use its good offices for the settlement, by the means mentioned in the Article 33 of the Charter, of:

(a) Controversies arising from frontier violations;

(b) Controversies directly connected with the application of the frontier conventions recommended to the four Governments under this resolution;

(c) Complaints regarding conditions on the border which may be brought to the attention of the commission by one Government against another.

(6) In order to keep the Security Council informed the commission shall:

(a) Whenever it may deem it useful, investigate any alleged frontier violations;

(b) Investigate complaints by any of the Government concerned with the respect to conditions on the border whenever, in its opinion, these conditions are likely to lead to a deterioration of the situation. Its authority with respect to investigation shall be identical to that vested in the Commission established under the resolution of the Security Council of 19 December 1946.

(c) the commission shall have its headquarter in Salonika.

(d) The commission shall be accredited, as an organ of the Security Council, to the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia and shall have the right access to them. The commission shall perform its tasks on either side of the border with the co-operation of the officials and nationals of the four Governments concerned.

(e) The commission shall establish its own rules of procedure and methods of conducting its business.

(f) The commission shall render regularly quarterly reports to the Security Council, or more frequently if it thinks fit.

(g) The commission shall have the staff necessary to perform its functions and shall have the authority to appoints suitable persons able to act as border observers and to report on the observance of the frontier conventions recommended under this resolution, the state of the frontier area, and cognate matters.

(h) The commission shall commence its works as soon as practicable after 1 September 1947.

It shall remain in existence until 31 August 1949. The establishment of the Commission in Salonika will put an end to the Commission of Investigation established by the resolution of the Council of 19 December 1946 and to the Subsidiary Group thereof, established by the resolution of 18 April 1947.

7. The Security Council, conscious of the gravity of the situation, appeals to the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia, calling upon them by their loyal co-operation in the measures proposed above to the extent of their ability to the re-establishment of peaceful conditions in the area concerned.

Cfr. *Yearbook of United Nations 1947-1948*, pp. 344-5.

⁴² Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter sets out the UN Security Council's powers to maintain peace. It allows the Council to "determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression" and to take military and nonmilitary action to "restore international peace and security". Chapter VII also gives the Military Staff Committee responsibility for strategic coordination of forces placed at the disposal

Among the other members of the Council it deserve to report that Australia, which even try in all the way to differentiate herself from Great Britain, remain a solid ally of the Western block, preferred to vote the US draft and that the French delegate, who called the need to look forward.

Despite the announced possibility of the Soviet veto, the US went to vote their proposal, which reflect almost integrally the proposals of the Commission of Investigation, and it received 9 votes in favor and 2 against (Poland and the USSR veto). The USSR proposal get only two votes in favor and 9 against (including the US, British, French and Chinese vetoes), formalizing an ongoing stalemate (which was repeated in many occasions, from the Korean to the Suez crisis).

In the meantime, Greece continued to appeal the UNSC to intervene, specifically asking the question would put under the framework of Chapter VII. Australia prepared a draft resolution which would have determined the situation to be a threat to the peace and direct to all the parties, in accordance to the Article 40 of the Charter,⁴³ to enter in direct negotiations.⁴⁴

Again this proposal was vetoed by USSR; the US proposed a new draft resolution which put the blame openly Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, which saw the same end. Then, another draft, this time proposed by Poland, effectively more moderate in which there no allegations or blames to the parties and with an invitation to resume diplomatic relations and enter in direct negotiations got 9 abstentions and two votes in favor (USSR and Poland).

Then it started a long debate and bitter procedural battle within the Council with USSR and Poland fiercely against, on the competence of the Assembly now to examine the Greek problem; finally the Council adopted the UNSCR 34 (1947) of 15 September 1947.⁴⁵ Although Poland and the USSR voted against the proposal, the President of the Council

declared it to be a procedural one and thus not subjected to the veto.

The US decision to push for move the file of Greece from the UNSC to the UNGA originated some concern in the Great Britain. London, although supportive in to pursue an UN-led mechanism of surveillance of the northern Greek frontiers, was hostile to build up the role of the Assembly reducing the ones of the Council (where they could use the veto).

of the UN Security Council. It is made up of the chiefs of staff of the five permanent members of the Council (even it met only one time, on the eve of the US-led intervention in Iraq to liberate Kuwait in 1991 at the level of the Chief of Defence forces of the P5).

The Chapter VII include the articles from 39 to 51 of the Charter.

The UN Charter's prohibition of member states of the UN attacking other UN member states is central to the purpose for which the UN was founded in the wake of the destruction of World War II: to prevent war. This overriding concern is also reflected in the Nuremberg Trials' concept of a crime against peace "starting or waging a war against the territorial integrity, political independence or sovereignty of a state, or in violation of international treaties or agreements..." (crime against peace), which was held to be the crime that makes all war crimes possible.

Cfr. <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-vii/index.html>, consulted on 02 July 2017.

⁴³ Article 40 - In order to prevent an aggravation of the situation, the Security Council may, before making the recommendations or deciding upon the measures provided for in Article 39, call upon the parties concerned to comply with such provisional measures as it deems necessary or desirable. Such provisional measures shall be without prejudice to the rights, claims, or position of the parties concerned. The Security Council shall duly take account of failure to comply with such provisional measures.

Cfr. <http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/chapter-vii/>, consulted on 1 July 2017.

⁴⁴ S/471

⁴⁵ *The Security Council*

- (a) *Resolves* that the dispute between Greece on the one hand, and Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria on the other, be taken off the list of matters of which the Council is seized; and
- (b) *Requests* that Secretary-General be instructed to place all records and documents in the case at the disposal of the General Assembly.

Cfr. [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/34\(1947\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/34(1947)), consulted on 1 July 2017

The US, however, in consideration of the stalemate in the Council and the worries that a lack of a non-Communist monitoring at the Greeks borders would abet Soviet efforts and was determined in and on 15 September 1947 the issue was removed by the Council agenda, just a preparation of the decisive step in Assembly.

Chapter 5

The establishment of UNSCOB

The 'Truman Doctrine' was first announced to Congress by President Harry S. Truman on 12 March 1947 (when there was harsh debate at the Council for the Commission of Investigation and the Subsidiary Group) and it was further developed on 12 July 1948 when he pledged to contain Soviet threats to Greece and Turkey. US forces were not directly involved on it, but Congress appropriated gifts, dons and financial aid to support the economies and the militaries of Greece and Turkey. More generally, the Truman Doctrine implied American support for other nations threatened by Soviet communism. The 'Truman Doctrine' became the foundation of American foreign policy, and led, in 1949, to the formation of NATO, a military alliance that is still in effect. Truman's speech is widely perceived as to date the start of the Cold War. The enunciation of the 'Truman Doctrine' made harsher, if it is possible, the rising confrontation between USA and USSR and the UN become one the most favorite battlefield for it.

The arrival of the files of Greece at the UNGA decisively open a new phase in the UN action and it could be established a link between the 'Truman Doctrine' and the activation of UNSCOB.

Having been removed from the agenda of the Security Council the Greek question came before the General Assembly in the autumn of 1947. The Assembly with the report of the Commission of Investigation (established by the Security Council) before it, now had to decide whether a new body should be established. It decided to set a Special Committee, which would assist the governments concerned to comply with the recommendations that it decided to make.

The USSR attempted, unsuccessfully, to block it and to remove it from the agenda of the 1st Committee (Political) of the Assembly, to which the case was assigned by the Presidency of Assembly.⁴⁶

The Members States, which later voted against the establishment of UNSCOB, during the debate expressed their full hostility and at the debate of the 1st Committee said:

USSR – The Special Committee had been given functions and terms of reference which were incompatible with the sovereign equality set forth in the [UN] Charter. Therefore, the Committee contradicted the principles, which were the basis of the Organization of the United Nations. In thus contradicted the principle of sovereignty of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. Because of these profound considerations of principle, the delegation of USSR could not take an affirmative attitude towards the establishment of the Committee and could not participate in the election of the members of the Committee. The Government of USSR would not participate in the Special Committee.

Yugoslavia - The terms of reference of the Special Committee and its tasks formed an hostile act against Yugoslavia. The headquarters of the Special Committee would be in Salonika, near to the Yugoslav border, and the Committee was authorized to make investigations on the territory of Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia had been singles out as a country guilty for the interference in Greece, and there was no mention of the great powers, which were responsible for this interference. Yugoslavia considered the establishment of the Special Committee as [an act] contrary to the sovereignty of Yugoslavia, a Charter Member of the Organization.

Yugoslavia was a sovereign country and it knew how to carry out its international obligations, without [the] help of anybody.

⁴⁶ A/409, Report of the 1st C.ttee, GAOR, 2nd sess., plen. mtgs., Annex 8.

Poland – Poland would not be able to take part in the Special Committee. The United States resolution contained the finding of guilt against Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia for rendering assistance to the guerrilla fighting against the Greek Government, and these charges had not been proven. The Polish delegation did not consider the Special Committee could serve a useful purpose and did not propose to take part.

Byelorussian SSR – The Byelorussian delegation considered that the setting up of the Special Committee would not solve the difficulties, which had arisen in Greece. It disregarded the interference of the United State and the United Kingdom in the internal affairs, which was responsible for the present situation in that country. The delegation of Byelorussian SSR would not participate in the election of this Special Committee.

Czechoslovakia – The Czechoslovak delegation would not take part in the debate and in the work concerning the composition of the Special Committee. The evidence submitted in the report of the Commission was entirely unfounded. The functions of the present Committee were not such to permit the solution of the problem.

Ukraine SSR – For the reasons already expressed by the representatives of USSR, Poland and Byelorussian SSR, the Ukrainian delegation refused to take part in the voting of the membership of the Special Committee.⁴⁷

The 1st Committee heard representatives from Albania and Bulgaria (these two states joined the organization on December 1955) at its 64th meeting, while Yugoslavia did not formulated request of hearings at the Committee, after it, forwarded the file to the plenary.

Also in the Committee, the scene saw the now usual trade of allegations between the USSR and pro-Soviet states and the pro-Western group of states. USA and USSR re-presented identical draft resolutions rejected few weeks before at the Council and Washington ceased definitively to play the role of ‘quasi-mediator’ played at the beginning of the discussion of the Greek file at the Council, replacing Great Britain in the role of the hardliner actor against the Soviets.

After the passage at the 1st Committee, the file landed at the plenary of the General Assembly; again the pro-Soviet states opposed to the *demarche* and USSR and Poland officially notify the President that they will not provide any diplomatic and/or military personnel to any special committee that would be set up to observe the compliance of the concerned government.

The vote at the Assembly saw the adoption of the US-draft resolution with 36 votes in favor, 6 against and 10 abstentions. The USSR proposal was rejected with 40 votes against, 6 in favor and 11 abstentions.

Thus, despite this announcement of there will be not any cooperation from the socialist countries neighboring Greece, and, as above mentioned, the Assembly adopted the report of the 1st Committee by 40 votes in favor,⁴⁸ 6 against⁴⁹ and 11 abstentions.⁵⁰ Under this resolution, the Assembly called upon Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to do nothing to provide aid and assistance to the Greek rebels, to establish normal diplomatic relations, and, most important, to set up an effective mechanism of border control. The most important point was, of course, the setting up of the first UN’s observer group with a role to play in the

⁴⁷ A/409, Report of the 1st C.ttee, GAOR, 2nd sess., plen. Mtgs., Annex 8, pp. 1511-2.

⁴⁸ Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Iran, Iraq, Liberia, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Siam, Turkey, South Africa, UK, USA, Uruguay, Venezuela.

⁴⁹ Poland, Czechoslovakia, USSR, Byelorussia SSR, Ukraine, USSR and Yugoslavia.

⁵⁰ Afghanistan, Denmark, Egypt, Guatemala, India, Lebanon, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Syria, Yemen.

maintenance (or keeping, according a more modern term) the international peace and security.

Having been removed from the UNSC agenda in mid-September 1947, the Greek question arrived at Assembly, and on 21 October, as above-mentioned, with the UNGAR 109 (II), established the UNSCOB.

The resolution included many of the suggestions of the Commission of Inquiry and of the Subsidiary Group. In a last attempt to involve the socialist states, the Committee had conciliatory and not only observations missions. As well, the document included a diplomatic *volet*, where all sides were invited to establish normal diplomatic relations. Again, Albania Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, despite considered politically and militarily responsible of the support of the anti-government forces in Greece, were invited to refrain to support the forces hostiles to the Athens government.

However the preamble of the Resolution was very emphatic and reflect the general principle of the Charter in order to reinforce legitimacy and acceptance.⁵¹

⁵¹ 1. *Wehereas* the peoples of the United Nations have expressed in the Charter of the United Nations their determination to practice tolerance and to live together in peace with one another neighbor and to unite their strength to maintain international peace and security: and to that end the members of the United Nations have obligated themselves to carry out the purposes and principles of the Charter,

2. *The General Assembly of the United Nations,*

Having considered the record of the Security Council proceedings in connexion with the complaint of the Greek government of 3 December 1946, including the report submitted by the Commission of Investigation established by the Security Council resolution of 19 December 1946 and information supplied by the Subsidiary Group of the Commission of Investigation subsequent to the report of the Commission;

3. *Taking account* of the report of the Commission of Investigation which found by a majority vote that Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia had given assistance and support to the guerrillas fighting against Greek Government;

4. *Calls upon* Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to do nothing which could furnish aid and assistances to the said guerrillas;

5. *Calls upon* Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia on the one ahnd and Greece on the other to co-operate in the settlement of their disputes by peaceful means, and to that end recommends:

1) That they establish normal diplomatic and good neighbourly relations among themselves as soon as possible;

2) that they establish frontier conventions providing for effective machinery for the regulation and control of their common frontiers and for the pacific settlement of frontier incidents and disputes;

3) that they co-operate in the settlement of the problems arising out of the presence for the refugees in the four States concerned through voluntary repatriation wherever possible and that they take effective measures to prevent the participation of such refugees in political or military activity;

4) That they study the practicability of concluding agreements for the voluntary transfer of minorities;

6. *Establishes* a Special Committee:

(1) To observe the compliance by the four Governments concerned with the foregoing recommendations:

(2) To be available to assist the Government concerned in the implementation of such recommendations:

7. *Recommends* that the four Governments concerned co-operate with the Special Committee in enabling it to carry out these functions:

8. *Authorizes* the Special Committee, if in its opinion further consideration of the subject matter of this resolution by the General Assembly prior to its next regular session is necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security, to recommend to the Members of the United Nations that a special session of the General Assembly be convoked as a matter of urgency;

9. *Decides* that the Special Committee:

(1) Shall consist of representatives of Australia, Brazil, China, France, Mexico, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the United Kingdom and the United States, seats being held open for Poland and the Union of Soviets Socialist Republics;

(2) Shall have its principal headquarters in Salonika and with the co-operation of the four Governments concerned shall perform its functions in such places and in the territories of the four States concerned as it may deem appropriate;

(3) Shall render a report to the next regular session of the general Assembly and to any prior special session which might be called to consider the subject matter of theis resolution, and shall render such interim reports as it may deem appropriate to the Secretary-General for transmission to the Members of the Organization: in any

The debate at Assembly was marked by violent and accusatory tones from both sides, this become a red lines in all the meetings referring the Greek question (a similar violent tone will mark the other major file incoming, the Korean one).

The voters against the US-draft resolution repeated the complaints expressed already at the 1st Committee debate, but even more vehemently. Andrey Vyshinsky labelled the future work of UNSCOB as “nonsense” and a “useless mass of junk and garbage” and pointed out that the US, providing their support to a small clique of corrupt individualist in Athens, transformed the country in a US colony and that the Anglo-American intervention in the “rotten and reactionary” Greek government pushed the country in the civil war.

According to an author,⁵² the creation of UNSCOB had the side effect to expropriate Greece’s foreign policy from the national government. Initially Great Britain, and then US, had undertaken important efforts to alleviate Greece’s desperate economic crisis, while the Balkan issue would be dealt with a well-equipped (and strongly US-backed) technical and political organ of the UN. According to him, there are no doubt that the UNSCOB was part of a wider US action in the region. However, in the US action there also the conviction that the Greek government was not in condition to take care of its own country.⁵³

Among the comments against the vote of the Assembly, the Polish Perm. Rep., Mr. Lagne stated that the absence of a genuine desire to reach agreement had characterized proceedings in the 1st Committee, It would have been better, according to him, to set up a drafting committee which would had work for the reconciliation between the different draft resolutions: “However, a later proposal, first to discuss and vote on the part of the United States resolution which establishes a special committee, was adopted. In a quick vote, which came upon the representatives rather suddenly and unexpectedly, this part of the United States resolution was passed. This decided the basic issue. A drafting sub-committee, or some method of bringing together the points of view, was already out of place and the representative of Sweden, who had a compromise solution, had no other course than to withdraw his resolution. In this way, the Committee had disposed of a compromise proposal. Proposals made by Colombia to introduce a more conciliatory tone into the first part of the US resolution were also rejected. A Franco-British amendment was accepted with the concurrence of the US. However, this amendment, tough appearing to be conciliatory, does not introduce any substantial change into the original text. It leaves unchanged the spirit and the intent of the resolution. The way in which the establishment of the special commission proposed by the US was carried through the 1st Committee indicates clearly that such a commission is not designed to serve the purpose of conciliation, but rather to become a means of further intervention in the affairs of Greece and in the relations between Greece and

reports to the General Assembly the Special Committee may make such recommendations to the General Assembly as it deems fit;

(4) Shall determine its own procedure, and may establish such sub-committees as it deems necessary;

(5) Shall commence its work within thirty days after the final decision of the General Assembly on this resolution, and shall remain in existence pending a new decision of the General Assembly.

10. *The General Assembly Request* the Secretary-General to assign to the Special Committee staff adequate to enable it to perform its duties, and to enter into a standing arrangement with each of four Governments concerned to assure the Speical Committee, so far as it may find it necessary to exercise its functions within their territories, of full freedom of movement and all necessary facilities for the performances of its functions.

Cfr. UNGAR 109 (II), 21 Oct. 1947.

⁵² NACHMANI. A., *International intervention in the Greek civil war, the UNSCOB 1947-1952*, New York, Praeger, 1990, p. 37.

⁵³ Lecture delivered by Col. Allen C. Miller to the US observers of UNSCOB attending a refresher course, 28 February 1949, Independence (Mo.), Harry S. Truman Library, Harry N. Howard Papers, Box 4.

her northern neighbours, an intervention which will not contribute and cannot contribute towards the improvement of these relations. Under the circumstances described, my Government find it impossible to take part in such a commission if it should be established by the General Assembly. I have made a statement to this effect before the 1st Committee, and I repeat it now before the whole Assembly. Our readiness to co-operate in any honest attempt to solve the Greek question has been demonstrated many times. We have shown it in the Security Council by voting for the establishment of the Commission of Investigation concerning Greek frontier incidents, and by actively participating in the formulation of its terms of reference. We have shown it by our active participation in the Commission of Investigation and later in the Subsidiary Group. We have shown it by our support of the proposal to create a commission to guarantee, through proper supervision, that foreign economic aid given to Greece be utilized for the reconstruction of the Greek economy rather than for purposes of political intervention. We have shown it by the proposal of compromise and conciliation which our representative made before the Security Council.”⁵⁴

The representative of Yugoslavia noted that the resolution which established UNSCOB had as its starting point the acceptance of the views of the Commission of Investigation. But this Commission had been biased, and certain members seemed to think that its function had not been to investigate but to prevent the exercise of the free choice by the Greek peoples: “The manner in which many members of the Commission of Investigation interpreted the role entrusted to them by the Security Council is perhaps best characterized by the principal personality of this Commission, the representative of the United States, Mr. Mark Ethridge told journalists in New York on 9 June 1947: ‘There is no question that Greece would have gone over to the communist minority had not the United Nations stepped in’ As soon I read this statement I wrote a letter to Mr. Trygve Lie, the Secretary-General, in which I said among other things: ‘It seems to me that by this conduct Mr. Ethridge, although one of the leading and most influential members of the Commission has overlooked or repudiated his status as a United Nations agent, subject to the [UN] Charter and all other obligations of United Nations membership. His views as expressed to the press must throw a peculiar light on whatever proposals, acts, resolutions or reports emanate from the Commission as a consequence of Mr. Ethridge initiative’”⁵⁵

⁵⁴ GAOR, 2nd Session. Plen. Mtg. 97, pp. 395-6.

⁵⁵ GAOR, 2nd Session. Plen. Mtg. 98, p. 416-

Chapter 6

Function and mandate of UNSCOB

The functions and mandate of UNSCOB, or the interpretation and implementation of the term of reference, was a key element for the entire life of the body. This was a persistent problem and involved not only the group of States which were against it, but also among the States, which supported the Committee and was origin of continue frictions and discussions.

Also in the case of UNSCOB, the political struggle about it paved the way of other UN bodies later established, where the political profile was high and, consequently, the modalities of their work was a political battlefield among the Member States, which fought among them in order to impress a direction or another line to the body.

For UNSCOB, the interpretation of the mandate of was of a high profile of its entire life, and the result of the work of the Committee was considered, at least at the early stage, as a central element to lead the future action of the organization vis-à-vis some Member States.

The functions of UNSCOB were laid down in paragraph 6 of the establishing resolution of 21 October 1947.

The Special Committee on the Balkans was tasked to:

6. (1) *To observe the compliance by the four Governments concerned with the foregoing recommendations;*

(2) *To be available to assist the four Governments concerned in the implementation of such recommendations.*

The functions specified in paragraph 6 (1) is more concern than the conciliatory functions specified in paragraph 6 (2); saying that the two points are fully related to each other. In this light, the concept related to the words ‘foregoing recommendations’ refer to the paragraphs 4 and 5 of the establishing resolution of UNSCOB. Paragraph 4 calls upon the three communist states (Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia) to stop all action that could provide support and assistance to the anti-Greek guerrilla; thus while paragraph 5 was addressed to Greece, but as well to the other three parties, with a wide package of requests, calling for the establishment of normal diplomatic relations and neighbor ties, the establishment of frontier conventions, co-operation over the problem of refugees, and a study of the possibility of the voluntary transfer of minorities.

The problem of the regular interpretation of the mandate of UNSCOB emerged since the beginning of the activities of the Committee and the adjustment of it was stressed in the 1st Interim Report, who said:

7. *The Committee considered that its [of the UNSCOB] work of acquiring first-hand information on the element of the situation facing it fell into two parts, namely, continuous observation of the general circumstances prevailing in the frontier areas, where it would be obviously impossible for the members of the Committee themselves to spend the required amount of time, and consultations with the appropriate governments supplemented by a study of documentary material of a varied character with a view to assisting the four governments concerned, pursuant to paragraph 6 (1) of the resolution of the General Assembly. Hence, the Committee decided by its resolution of 27 November 1947 (Annex 6) to establish observation groups to observe and report continuously to the Committee to what extent good neighborly relations exist on the relevant frontier areas, and also, by its resolution of 10 December 1947 (Annexes 7 and 8) to organize its study and programme of work with respect to the other matters dealt with by recommendations of the of the general Assembly, by the establishment*

*of three sub-committees responsible broadly for general observation; political problems; and refugee and minority questions respectively.*⁵⁶

The genericity of TOR of UNSCOB to the establishment in the observation groups were originally set up to report solely on the question of the establishment of good-neighborly relations on the frontiers: these functions were, however rapidly extended to cover other aspects of the role envisaged for UNSCOB in UNGAR 109 (II).

Those changes, defined in the initial activities of the Committee, were reported in the first, full fledged report:

16. The groups were originally instructed to ‘observer and to report continuously to the Committee to what extent good neighborly relations’ existed on the frontiers between Greece and her northern neighbors. The instructions, originally based on paragraph 5 (1) of the Special Committee’s terms of reference, were under constant review. On 26 April 1948, in the light of the accumulated experience, it was decided to base the observers’ instructions on paragraph 4 as well as on paragraph 5 of the Special Committee’s terms of references and the groups were instructed to make use of all available source of information which they deemed useful, whether direct information, inquiry or investigation, in their work.⁵⁷

The first step of the enlargement of the functions and the interpretation of the functions of UNSCOB’s observation group did not, met, however, the approval of Australian delegation to UNSCOB, which submitted a formal (and very well elaborated) observation and reservation, which opened a first, major rift inside the Committee cohesion and work capacity.

The Australian delegation stated:

‘The Australian delegation has a general reservation to the chapter III of the [1st] report. This chapter as submitted for approval, is essentially concerned with paragraph 4 of the resolution of 21 October 1947 according to which the General Assembly ‘calls on Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to do nothing which could furnish aid and assistance to the said guerrilla’. The Special Committee, however, was given by the Assembly no mandate in relation to this injunction. It was merely told ‘to observe the compliance by the four Governments concerned’ with certain ‘recommendations’. This ‘observation’ was to be secondary to the primary function of the Committee... ‘to assist the four Governments concerned in the implementation of such recommendations’.

The ‘recommendations’ were four-fold and were set out in paragraph 5 of the General Assembly’s resolution. It was in order to observe the compliance of the four Governments with one of these recommendations, namely ‘... that they establish good neighbourly relations among themselves...’ that the Special Committee originally decided to establish observation groups. It was unanimous opinion that the Special Committee on 15 January 1948 that the instructions to the observers were based firmly on paragraph 5(1) of the Assembly’s resolution to the exclusion of paragraph 4.

It soon became apparent, however that the observation groups were not merely concerning themselves with the presence or absence of good neighbourly relations, but were carrying out investigations and, in particular, were cross-examining witnesses and hearing evidence from various sources relating to ‘aid and assistance’ just as the original Balkan Commission of Investigation had done.⁵⁸ That, however, was a very different body. It was a commission of investigation appointed by the Security Council ‘to ascertain the fact relating to frontier incidents’. The Special Committee, on the other hand, was an organ of the General Assembly and was primarily a mediatory and conciliatory body with secondary functions of political observation.

⁵⁶ Cfr. A/521, 9. Jan. 1948, 1st Interim Report of UNSCOB, p. 7.

⁵⁷ Cfr. A/574, 30 June 1948, 1st Report of UNSCOB.

⁵⁸ It is merely a wrong reference to the Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents.

In the light of these investigation activities, the Special Committee reconsidered the instructions to the observation groups. In May 1948, the Special Committee not only decided to base instructions to the observation groups on paragraph 4 of the General Assembly resolution as well as on paragraph 5 (1), but authorized the observers 'to make use of all available sources of information which they deemed useful, whether direct observation, enquiry or investigation.'

The Australian delegation dissented from this reversal of the unanimous decision of 15 January 1948. While agreeing that the Special Committee had power to interpret its own terms of reference, it could not accept an interpretation, which amounted, in its view, if not to an arrogation to itself of powers, which the General Assembly had refrained from giving it, at least to an undue emphasis on subsidiary functions.

It is largely on the 'investigations' by the observation groups of 'aid and assistance' that chapter III, and in particular chapter IIIB, of the report is based.

The Australian delegation as a rule abstained from these 'conclusions' contained in chapter III B, which were not based on the direct observations of observers. In its opinion, it was as unnecessary as it was inadvisable to draw categorical conclusions either from the presumptions of observers who had no access to three of four countries concerned or from the evidence of witnesses produced by only one of the four interested Governments.⁵⁹

Maintaining then its view, that the observation groups should have been limited to observing the compliance or non-compliance of the Governments concerned with the Assembly recommendation that they establish good neighbourly relations among themselves, the Australian delegation must enter a general reservation to chapter III of the report. This section gives disproportionate emphasis to activities, which in the opinion of the Australian delegation were not in accordance with the spirit and intention of the General Assembly when it passed its resolution of 21 October 1947.⁶⁰

The Committee simply ignored the Australian objection and proceed in the progressive enlargement of its mandate, originally conceived very narrowly (or at least not enough wide) by the General Assembly. It should be added that Australia, while firmly anti-Soviet partner of the US-led coalition, especially after WWII made several steps and took positions which marked a difference, sometimes substantial, *vis-à-vis* UK. The entire political leadership of the country made all efforts to differentiate their country from the image of a member of the 'British Empire'.

UNSCOB's original instructions to its observation groups directed their attention to examining to what extent good neighbourly relations existed on the frontier between Greece and her northern neighbours. Under these instructions, very few complaints by the Greek government of provocations by the northern neighbours were examined. The Special Committee was intent on obtaining the cooperation of all of four government in order to fulfil its conciliatory role and wished to avoid any appearance of *parti pris* stance. As consequence, the efforts mentioned in part A, paragraphs 41, 47, 49 and 52 were made focusing the co-operation of all sides and putting the complaints on a equal position. While the Committee was looking forward the replies of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, the ones of Greece were forwarded to the competent observations group for information only. After the reception of the replies to the Committee requests of information, and despite the refusal of the three communist countries to cooperate of certain specific cases (border incidents), UNSCOB set up a new policy on 4 June 1948 stating:

⁵⁹ Greece.

⁶⁰ Cfr. A/574, 30 June 1948, 1st Report of UNSCOB, Annex 4.

‘Whereas the three Government concerned have not yet recognized the Special Committee, but notwithstanding this the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia have communicated to the Secretary-General [of the UN] further alleged frontier incidents, The Special Committee, in view of its task as defined in the paragraph 6 of the resolution⁶¹ of the General Assembly of 21 October 1947, in the expectation that the three Governments concerned will render it possible to investigate all frontier incidents from both sides of the frontier,

Resolves:

- (a) To examine any alleged frontier violations which may have been or may be communicated after 1 May 1948 to the Secretary-General or to the Special Committee by any of the three Governments concerned, and
- (b) To transmit these communications to the appropriate observation groups for investigation.
- (c) The observation groups will deal with such communications in accordance with the procedure in force for complaints concerning alleged frontier violations, submitted by the Greek Liaison Service’.⁶²

The above-mentioned divisions between the Committee and the Australian delegation expanded also on the objections on the requirement of political recommendations. Again, the Australian delegation in UNSCOB submitted a note on this issue saying:

‘While agreeing with the factual conclusions contained in chapter IV, the Australian delegation abstain from the political conclusions IV and VI, contained in paragraph 64 and 66 of that chapter. In its view, the Special Committee is primarily a body of mediation with the additional functions of observing and reporting to the General Assembly to pass judgement or take decisions on the basis of the facts reported by the Special Committee. The Australian delegation likewise abstains from the recommendation I, II and II contained in the paragraph 69, 70 and 71 of chapter V. Noting the preamble to the recommendations which states that the Special Committee ‘does not feel confident that any recommendations made by it would assure a speedy solution of the existing difficulties’, the Australian delegation is of the opinion that in these circumstances it would have been wiser to have made no recommendations at this stage and have left the question of finding a solution to the general Assembly.’⁶³

On 27 November 1948, UNGA discussed and approved (47 votes in favor and 6 against, the small pro-Soviet block [USSR, Poland, Yugoslavia, Ukraine, Byelorussia, Czechoslovakia], and no abstentions) the resolution 193 (III) part A. This new resolution could be considered a second, important, step for the progressive adjustment of the UN-led machinery in monitoring the Greek conflict.

The UNGAR 193 (III) kept UNSCOB in being, with its functions of conciliation and observation, and confirmed in a more clear and explicit way, the political substance of the UNGAR 109 (II). However, it added new pivotal elements, which marked the evolution of the activities of the Committee. While the UNGAR 109 (II) simply noted that the Commission of Investigation had found (by a majority of vote) that the three communist countries supporting the Greek insurgents, the new resolution was more explicit and strong underlining the patent complicity of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia in the intromission of

⁶¹ Cfr. A/521, 9. Jan. 1948, 1st Interim Report of UNSCOB, p. 7.

⁶² Cfr. A/574.

⁶³ Cfr. A/644, 10 Sept. 1948, 1st Supplementary Report of UNSCOB, p.11

Greek internal affairs. Thus now, the UNGAR, not only fully integrated in the spirit and the letter of the document the positions of the UNSCOB, but ask to ‘all member states’ (and on it was implicitly extended to the non-member states as were Albania and Bulgaria), to refrain to any action designed to assist the Greek rebels.⁶⁴

Also, UNGA adopted unanimously two further resolutions, the 193 (III) part B and 193 (III)

⁶⁴ *The General Assembly,*

1. *Having considered* the reports of the Special Committee established by General Assembly Resolution 109 (III),

2. *Having noted* the conclusions of the Special Committee and, in particular, its unanimous conclusion that, despite the aforesaid resolution of the General Assembly, ‘the Greek guerrillas have continued to receive aid and assistance on a large scale from Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, with knowledge of the Governments of those countries, and that the Greek guerrillas in the frontier zones have, as found by the Special Committee:

(i) ‘Been largely dependent on external supply. Great quantities of arms, ammunition and other military stores have come across the border, notably during times of heavy fighting. Strongly held positions of guerrillas have protected their vital supply lines from Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and, in particular, from Albania. In recent months, there has been less evidence of receipt of supplies from Yugoslavia by the guerrillas;

(ii) ‘Frequently moved at will in territory across the frontier for tactical reasons, and have thus been able to concentrate their forces without interference by the Greek army, and to return to Greece when they wished’;

(iii) ‘Frequently retired safely into the territory of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia when the Greek army exerted great pressure’;

3. *Having noted* further the conclusion of the Special Committee that a continuation of this situation ‘constitute a threat to the political independence and territorial integrity of Greece and to peace in the Balkans’ and ‘that the conduct of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia had been inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations’;

4. *Having noted* the recommendations submitted by the Special Committee;

5. *Considers* that the continued aid given by Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to the Greek guerrillas endangers peace in the Balkans, and is inconsistent with the purpose and principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

6. *Calls upon* Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to cease forthwith rendering any assistance or support in any form to the guerrillas in fighting against Greek Government including the use of their territories as base for the preparation or launching of armed actions;

7. *Again call upon* Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to co-operate with Greece in the settlement of their dispute by peaceful means in accordance with the recommendations contained in resolution 109 (II);

8. *Calls upon* Albania Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to co-operate with the Special Committee in enabling it to carry out its functions, in particular the function of being available to assist the Governments concerned in accordance with paragraph 10 (c) of the present resolution, and upon Greece to continue to co-operate toward the same end;

9. *Recommend* to all Member of the United Nations and to all other States that their Governments refrain from any action designed to assist directly or through any other Government any armed group fighting against the Greek Government;

10. *Approves* the reports of the Special Committee, continues it in being with the functions conferred upon by resolution 109 (II) and instructs it:

(a) To continue to observe and report on the response of Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia to the General Assembly injunction not to furnish aid to the greek guerrillas, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 109 (II) and the present resolution;

(b) To continue to utilize observation groups with personnel and equipment adequate for the fulfilment of its task;

(c) To continue to be available to assist the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia in the implementation of resolution 109 (II) and of the present resolution; and for this purpose, in its discretion, to appoint and utilize the services and good offices of one or more persons whether or not members of the Special Committee;

11. *Decides* that the Special Committee shall have its principal headquarters in Greece and, with the co-operation of the Government or Governments concerned, shall perform its function in such places as it may deem appropriate for the fulfilment of its mission;

12. *Authorizes* the Special Committee to consult, in its discretion, with the Interim Committee with respect to the performances of its functions in the light of developments;

13. *Request* the Secretary-General to provide the Special Committee with adequate staff and facilities to enable to perform its functions.

Cfr. UNGAR 193 (III), par A, 27 Nov. 1948.

part C. Those, despite related to the Greek question, did not mentioned UNSCOB but recommended, respectively, the resumption of diplomatic relations among the concerned states and the renewal or drafting of further conventions, and the repatriation through the ICRC of Greek children who have been removed contrary to the wishes of their families.⁶⁵

The UNGAR two key chapters of the second report of UNSCOB, which stated, later corroborated stance:

7. The Special Committee was not only maintained in being with the functions of the conciliation and observation conferred upon the resolution of 1947, but express authorization was also given to continue to utilize the observation groups which had been established by the Special Committee early in 1948 to enable it to carry out its task of observing and reporting on the response of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to the injunction of the general Assembly to not to furnish aid to the Greek guerrillas.

*8. Furthermore, the Special Committee was authorized, in assisting the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to implement two resolutions, to appoint at its discretion and 'utilize the services and good offices of one or more persons whether or not member of the Special Committee.'*⁶⁶

The scenario was complicated when, on 29 September 1949, the General Assembly established the Conciliation Committee for Greece, within its 1st Committee (Political Affairs). The decision, which saw a strong controversy within the Western states, looked to alleviate the political tensions in the area, risked to undermine the conciliatory role of UNSCOB (even it remained more theoretical than real). However, the role of UNSCOB was further confirmed and even enlarged on its observation and interrogatory functions, and indirectly diminishing the role of the Conciliation Commission, regardless it was a UNGA-generated body too.

The consequent UNGAR 288 (IV) part A⁶⁷ formalized it and especially the paragraphs 6, 7, 8, 9 and 11 were relevant for the role, and politico-military weight assumed by the UNSOB in Greece, regardless that the war was at the moment *de facto* ended with the defeat of the communist insurgency; thus showing the determination of the US and the cohesion of its coalition of Member States within the Assembly to face in the strongest way, the challenge of the USSR.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ The UNGA as well as UNSC could articulate and modelling their own resolutions in separate parts, following the existence of a consensus which may emerge during the debate in the light of the adoption of it.

⁶⁶ Cfr. A/935, 2 Aug. 1949, 2nd Report of UNSCOB. This was done in the UNGAR 193 (III) part A.

⁶⁷ Approved with the same vote cast of the UNGAR 193 (III) on 18 November 1949.

⁶⁸ *The General Assembly,*

Having considered the reports of the UN Special Committee on the Balkans established by General Assembly resolution 109 (II) and continued by the General Assembly resolution 193 (III), including the additional facts and the recommendations in its supplementary report of 10 September 1949, and in particular its unanimous conclusions that:

(i) Albania and Bulgaria have continued to give moral and material assistance to the Greek guerrilla movement, Albania being the principal source of material assistance;

(ii) There has been an increase in the support in the support afforded to the guerrilla from certain States not bordering upon Greece, particularly Romania;

Having noted the report of the Conciliation Committee established by the First Committee of in its resolution of 29 September 1949,

1. *Considers* that the active assistance given to the Greek guerrillas by Albania on particular, by Bulgaria and by certain other States, including Romania, in disregard of the Assembly's recommendations, is contrary to the purpose and principles of the United Nations Charter and endangers peace in the Balkans.

2. *Considers* that further foreign assistance to the Greek guerrillas resulting in the launching new armed actions against Greece from adjacent territory would seriously increase the gravity of the danger to the peace and would justify the Special Committee in recommending, pursuant to paragraph 8 of the resolution 109 (II), the convocation, as a matter of urgency, of a Special Session of General Assembly in order to give consideration to further steps necessary for the removal of this danger to the peace;

The UNGAR 288 (IV), part A also recorded the new role of Yugoslavia in the Greek civil war, due to the rupture with Moscow. This explain the substantial drop of the name of Belgrade from the resolution reflecting the new political scenario, as well as the inclusion of Romania in the allegations in providing support to the Greek communist insurgency.

As mentioned above, the UNGAR 288 (IV) reflected the paradoxical situation, where the same General Assembly, in stressing the role of UNSCOB try to corner and limit the role of the Conciliation Commission, established, even with a different majority scheme, by the same Assembly.

3. *Calls upon* Albania, Bulgaria and the other States concerned to cease forthwith rendering any assistance or support to the guerrillas in fighting against Greece, including the use of their territories as a base for the preparation or launching of armed actions;

4. *Recommends* to all Members of the United Nations and to all other states:

(a) To refrain from any action designed to assist directly or through any other Government any armed group fighting against Greece;

(b) To refrain from the direct or indirect provision of arms or other material of war to Albania and Bulgaria until the Special Committee or another competent United Nations organ has determined that the unlawful assistance of these States to the Greek guerrillas has ceased;

(c) To take into account, in their relations with Albania and Bulgaria, the extent to which those two countries henceforth abide by the recommendations of the General Assembly in their relations with Greece;

5. *Again call upon* Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to co-operate with Greece in the settlement of their differences by peaceful means in accordance with the provisions of Article 2, paragraph 3 of the [UN] Charter, and to that end recommends:

(a) That, in view of the existence of diplomatic relations between the Governments of Greece and Yugoslavia, further efforts be made by those Governments through diplomatic channels to resolve their difference between them;

(b) That Albania and Bulgaria on the one hand, and Greece on the other, establish normal diplomatic relation and good-neighborly relations, and endeavor through diplomatic channels to resolve their differences;

(c) That they renew previously operative conventions or conclude new ones providing effective machinery for the regulation and control of their common frontiers and for the peaceful adjustment of frontier incidents;

6. *Calls upon* Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to co-operate with the Special Committee in enabling it to carry out its functions, in particular the functions in accordance with paragraph 10 (c) of [UNGA] resolution 193 9III) and paragraph 8, 9 and 11 of the present resolution, and upon Greece to continue to co-operate towards the same end;

7. *Approves* the reports of the Special Committee and continues it in being in accordance with all the terms of references contained in the present resolution and in General Assembly resolutions 109 (II) and 193 (III), which are hereby continued in effect;

8. *Again instructs* the Special Committee to continue to be available to assist the four Governments concerned in the implementation of the [UN General] Assembly resolutions, in particular to promote the restoration of normal relations between Greece and her northern neighbors and the maintenance of the international peace and security in the Balkans, and for this purpose continues the authorization to the Special Committee, in its discretion, to appoint and utilize the services and good offices of one or more persons whether or not members of the Special Committee;

9. *Noted* the report of the Special Committee, which states that the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia have publicly announced that the Greek guerrillas who have entered their respective territories have been disarmed and interned, and calls upon all States harbouring Greek guerrilla to co-operate with the Special Committee or other appropriate international agency for verification of the disarming and disposition of the Greek guerrillas who have entered their respective territories;

10. *Calls upon* all States harbouring Greek nationals as result of the Greek guerrilla' operations against Greece to facilitate the peaceful repatriation to Greece of all such individuals who desire to return and live in accordance with the law of the land;

11. *Authorize* the Secretary-General to arrange, through the Special Committee or other appropriate United Nations or international agency, the extension of any feasible assistance to the Government concerned in making and carrying out arrangement for the repatriation to Greece or resettlement elsewhere of Greek guerrillas and other nationals who have been involved in the guerrilla warfare.

Cfr. UNGAR 288 (IV), par A, 18 Nov.1949

This reflected not only the ongoing discussion on the mandate of the UNSCOB, but also to its nature and at the same time the need of a step forward in the re-conciliation policies of the organization in the region, addressing problems existing well before that the crisis exploded after WWII.

On 1 December 1950, the UNGA confirmed the mandate of UNSCOB with the UNGAR 382 (V), part B, which ‘continues the Special Committee in being until the sixth session of the General Assembly, in accordance with the terms of reference and administrative arrangements contained in General Assembly resolution 109 (II), 193 (III) and 288 (IV) ...’ In 1950, when the Greek armed forces operations against the residual groups of communist insurgency were completely ceased and the search and repression of the communist activists was now exclusive matter of the Vasilikí Chorofylakí (for the rural areas) and Astynomia Poleon (in the cities), the functions of UNSCOB were confirmed in 3rd Report of the Committee: (...) 6. Section 1 of the 1950 provisional *Observation Service Manual* contains the following broad general instructions under the heading ‘Task of the Observation Service’.

1. Pursuant to the terms of reference of the Special Committee as laid down in the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly of:

21 October 1947,

27 November 1948,

8 November 1949,

the task of the UNSCOB observation service is to report to the Special Committee immediately and continuously on the situation in the regions assigned to it, in order to provide the Committee with information which, added to that which the Committee may dispose of from other sources, enables it to report in its turn to the General Assembly on the manner in which the States referred to in the said resolution are complying with General Assembly’s resolutions.

2. Observers shall at all times bear in mind that the purpose of their activities is to assist the Committee in fulfilling its essential task of improving relations between Greece and her norther neighbours.
3. Observers shall take every opportunity of submitting to the Special Committee any suggestion, which, in their opinion, might lead the Special Committee to make recommendations for the improvement of good-neighbourly relations between Greece on the one hand and Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia on the other.
4. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, observers shall not concern themselves with or report on matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State.
5. In the discharge of their duties, observers shall receive instructions only from the Special committee through the official channels as later defined.
6. Members of the of the observation service shall be guided by the fact that they are working for the highest international body: the United Nations. They shall discharge their duties accordingly, and behave with impartiality, loyalty, conscientiousness and tact.
7. In more specific terms, the provisional Observation Service Manual lays down the subjects on which the observers shall undertake inquiries:

The manner in which Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia on the one hand, and Greece on the other hand, are complying with the recommendations of the general Assembly;

The extent to which good neighbourly relations exist between the four countries;

Military and logistic assistance which might be rendered from outside Greece in any form whatsoever to armed groups fighting against the Greek Government;

The manner in which frontier conventions are being respected wherever they exist, or the practice customarily followed at the frontiers;

Removal and repatriation of children; and

Where applicable, questions concerning international refugees.⁶⁹ The issue of the mandate remain a key aspect also later, when the Balkan Sub-Commission of the Peace Observation Commission replaced the UNSCOB.

On 7 December 1951, the UNGA approved the Resolution 508 (IV). In the part A, where was decided to ‘discontinue the Special Committee within sixty days’ and expressed its warm gratitude for the gallantry with which the observers of the Special Committee have carried out their difficult and dangerous task’. The part B of the UNGAR 508 (IV) the UNGA noted that a Peace Observation Commission had been set up under its resolution 337A (V) (a.k.a. ‘Uniting for Peace’) now decided to ask this Commission to establish a Balkan Sub-Commission of between three and five members.

This Commission was given specific authority:

- (a) To dispatch such observers as it may deem necessary to any area of international tension in the Balkans on the request of any State or States concerned, but only to the territory of States consenting thereto;
- (b) To visit, if it deems necessary, any area in which observation requested under subparagraph (a) is being conducted;
- (c) To consider such data as may be submitted to by its members or observers and to make such reports as it deems necessary to the Peace Observation Commission and to the Secretary-General for the information of Member States.⁷⁰

It is matter of debate if this instrument given to the Sub-Commission is or not a *de facto* prorogation of the mandate of UNSCOB. It is a matter of fact the Sub-Commission entered in a scenario modified in favor of the Western group of states within the UN.

Remain remarkable the absence of any open reference to conciliation activities, which the UNGA constantly assigned to UNSCOB, regardless the duties of the Conciliation Committee.

In any case, the mandate of the Sub-Commission, and its interpretation was much less controversial than the one of UNSCOB in consideration of the new international and regional landscape.

Even as external factor, the Korean war impacted on the Greek scenario with the establishment of the UNPOC and then the Sub-Commission. The political life of Greece remained heavily changed by the outcome of the civil war with the exclusion of the left from the political life of the country. The leftist elements remained at the margin of the national political life. As well as the regional scenario changed dramatically with the Yugoslav schism, which isolated not only militarily Albania from the Soviet-controlled block. The establishment of NATO and the accession of Greece (and Turkey) between 1951 and 1952 sealed the US-led politico military architecture in the Mediterranean basin.

The Balkan Sub-Commission was established, by the UNPOC on 23 January 1952. It met in Paris on 31 January and decided to send observers to the frontier areas of Greece, their function being limited to reporting the facts. It invited the member states represented on the Sub-Commission – Colombia, France, Pakistan, Sweden and the US – each to make an observer available. The UK was invited to provide a principal observer and becoming *de facto* the leading nation of the body.

⁶⁹ Cfr. A/1307, 3rd Report of UNSCOB, 31 July 1950, Annexes, sect. 3.

⁷⁰ Cfr. UNGAR 508 (VI), 7 Dec. 1951, part B.

In December 1952 the UNPOC agreed to extend the existence of the Sub-Commission, even this decision was contested by the Commission but strongly requested by the Greek government.

The election of Dag Hammarskjöld from Sweden as second UN Secretary-General on 7 April 1953 represented the end of the exception regime established by its predecessor Trygve Lie and the UNPOC agreed in the summer of 1954 to discontinue the Sub-Commission, disregarding the persistent requests of Athens, and the last UN military observers left Greece on 31 July 1954.

Chapter 7

Similarities and differences between UNSCOB and other UN observation missions

In one of the tensest moments of the Cold War, the UN-led vigilance machinery worked tirelessly in Greece. However this architecture ran also because it was the best way for the major political actors of the crisis, USA and USSR, to deal with the Greek file and coincided in the keeping it working, even for diverging reasons.

The UNSCOB maybe was not the best option, but the others, like a direct confrontation between Washington and Moscow, was surely not better. UNSCOB, or the prolongation of the UN-led surveillance in a different way, was considered the most useful way to keep the Greek crisis within acceptable limits for the international community.

When, in 1951, at the General Assembly discussions for the termination of the activities of the Committee, Greece and the pro-Western Member States stressed, unequivocally the positive values of the work of UNSCOB in exposing the aggressor in Greece and thwarting communist intrigues and subversion. Also thanks to the Special Committee as sign of the willing of the UN to protect the country integrity, Greece developed the will and capacity to resist to the Communist-led conspiracy, and coherently, Athens asked its termination when the war against KKE was won.⁷¹

At the contrary (of course, on the values, but coinciding with the request of termination of the Special Committee), the pro-Moscow Member States presented denigrator observations over the UNSCOB work. That position was constant since the inclusion of the Greek file in the General Assembly's agenda, considered by them as unjustified and illegal. The illegality of the origin of the establishment of the Special Committee, made in their view, illegal all the activities of UNSCOB. Further, for them, the Special Committee had based its conclusions not on fact, but on highly biased evidences obtained from only one side, the Greek forces and the insurgent were not contacted by UNSCOB. Evidences tainted with torture and the threat of death sentences.⁷²

Giving that, the only conclusion acceptable is to demand, and agree, to the dissolution of UNSCOB, "not on the ground stated by the supporters of greek draft resolution, but on the ground that it had been harmful to the interest of the Greek people and had been responsible for the worsening of relations between Greece and its northern neighbors."⁷³

The coincidence of East-West views were rare in the records of the UN in the early '50s, especially when there was another East-West conflict ongoing (Korea). As above-mentioned, the coincidence of interest of USA and USSR to not worsening their already conflictual relations, allowed Washington to protect its own interest in Greece with other means than the UNSCOB. In the other side allowed Moscow to not bring the challenge too far and put at risk the stability and integrity of its satellites in the Balkans.

The prudent determination of the US administrations and the concern of Stalin about Greece where the insurance of UNSCOB, as well as for the Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents, Subsidiary Group and the Balkan Sub-Commission.

For 8 years, at the height of the Cold War and through crisis (close and far) the UN, with different architectures and different results, monitored Greek land, water and airspace. The Special Committee, as UN was considered by the US Administration as a useful tool to reject

⁷¹ Cfr. HIGGINS, R., *United Nations peacekeeping, documents and commentary*, Vol. I, *The Middle East 1946-1957*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1969, p. 33.

⁷² HIGGINS, op. cit., p. 33

⁷³ Ibidem.

the USSR block allegations that with the Truman doctrine, Washington take the control of Greece.⁷⁴

USSR and Poland stubbornly refused to fill their placed in the Special Committee, Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia (the latter also after the schism with Moscow) never allowed at the UNSCOB observers to enter in their territories, the communist galaxy blasted constantly the UN presence and action in Greece as illegal and one-sided.

UNGA's recommendations for a political settlement in the Balkans had no effect at all, and the action of the Conciliation Committee was useless (at the best). The absence of any presence of the views and positions of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia made the reports of UNSCOB to UNGA, formally correct but politically incomplete. It should be add also that the three socialist states, at the end were totally indifferent to the perception of the international public opinion (the so-called 'democratic' one of course was totally lined up).

Furthermore, UNSCOB was unable to achievement a settlement through its good offices, with the result that the UN contribution to the pacification on the Balkans, which arrived following other multilateral channels, was ineffective. Similarly, the evidences of support of Soviet block to the Greek guerrilla, submitted by the Special Committee had not appreciable effects on the course of the conflict .

A negative judgment on the result and effectiveness of UNSCOB on the controversial and central issue of the conciliation should considered that the socialist states had no minimal intention to agree to the efforts of a body in which they had no presence and whose legality they never recognized, in the substance Greece, even accepted the presence of the UN on its territory was no keen to improve the relations with states to which Athens had historical claims and supported the internal insurgency.

UNSCOB could not be blamed for its failure to conciliate because neither of the great powers, both permanent members of UNSC whose critical interest in the region were at stake, saw the international organization as an instrument of conciliation, as the end of the ephemera Conciliation Committee was another evidence.

The Special Committee was perceived as major political tool to be used in the confrontation between the blocks, anticipating a situation which marked the life of the UN till 1991. This situation produced a stalemate and as consequence transformed the fora of the UN in politico-ideological battlefield.

The US were frustrated by the use of Soviet vetoes, while Moscow was similarly humiliated by the pro-Western overwhelming majority in the UNGA votes. With these premises, there where little hopes that UNSCOB, also limited in the structure and with poor financial assets and funds, could alleviate the Balkan tensions.

As not planned, but highly relevant result, the Special Committee alleviate tensions between US and USSR in providing alternatives to direct military involvements, but not reduced the tensions between Greece on one hand and Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia on the other.

The Cold War, with its strong ideological confrontations reduced the room for conciliation and Greece was the first not interested in, closely followed by the US despite the formal approach to the first phase of the Conciliation Committee and the little more to the second one. Great Britain, with its skeptic approach toward UNSCOB, also said:

‘[conciliation] could not possibly succeed in [Greece]. The Palestine precedent shows the difficulty of mediation between two sides until one at least of them is prepared to submit to mediation as the lesser of a choice of evils. Even [General] Count Bernadotte [the UN mediator later assassinated] success was confined to negotiation of truce agreements when

⁷⁴ The unilateral involvement of US in Greece obtained also some perplexities in the West and the United Nations framework was perceived as preferable option; Cfr. GOODRICH, L., SIMONS ,A., *The United Nations and the International Peace and Security*, Washington DC, Brookings, 1955, p.198.

the Arabs in any case found it almost impossible to continue fighting. If the same circumstances do not obtain as between Greece and her neighbours, and these neighbours are not prepared to accept the idea of conciliation the [conciliation] is likely to fail and this will be another black mark for the United Nations'.⁷⁵

The continuation of fighting, especially when those moving in its favor, Greece (and for different, but coinciding reasons, also by US and UK) was looked as more useful than follow the path of conciliation/re-conciliation.

Especially from USSR and ancillary states, parties and media around the world, UNSCOB was widely blamed to be on the orders of the US and that the Secretary of State Marshall (especially) and contributed to the negative judgment of the work of the United Nations in Greece.⁷⁶ (6)

UNSCOB (as well as the Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents, the Subsidiary Group, the Conciliation Committee and the Sub-Commission), are considered highly marginal in the historiography and politico-military analysis of the Greek civil war which instead was focused on extra UN factors.

Those are generally identified in KKE' erroneous political and military strategy; Greek regular forces successful employment of strategies, leadership, weapons, training; US and UK military aid; the Yugoslav schism; the wider opposition of the Greek population to the ruthless methods of the insurgents; the wider political support of the international public opinion; the decreasing interest of Moscow for Greece and the growing concern for politico-ideological deviations in own camp; the brutal cut of aid from Albania and Bulgaria to the KKE as seeing the diminishing possibility of a military victory on the camp.

The modest outcome of the Special Committee (and of the UN) in Greek civil war reflect a situation common in the life of the international organization, were the political will and agenda of one (or more) Member State(s) impose a line to the entire operation and/or mission. Probably, a more intrusive and strong (and anti-Soviet, at the end) mandate of the Special Committee could have provoked retaliation from Moscow and/or proxies; thus, the inability of the UN to deal with the situation would led the US and British forces replace the UNSCOB observers, bringing the West on the edge of a wider military confrontation.

The residual function of UNSCOB (observation and report of the military situation and possible involvement of the northern neighbours of Greece) was the only implementable one. Their data collection for UNGA was possible despite the direct obstruction of the insurgents and the indirect one carried out by Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

As not planned, UNSCOB contributed to boost the morale of the Greece, sealed the UN approval on the Western analysis of the situation, thus providing and attractive justification for supporting the Greek government that could be used at both the domestic and international levels.⁷⁷ UNSCOB's inquiry in Greece was one of the similar bodies established

⁷⁵ COUFOUDAKIS, V., *The United States, United Nations and the Greek Question*, in IATRIDES, J. O. (ed.), *Greece in the 1940's - A Nation in Crisis*, Hanover, University Press of New England, N. H. 1981, p. 289.

⁷⁶ Actually there were recommendations of Members States of the Special Committee for the report's body during the phases of the preparation before the official publication of it as UN document. Of course, and very often, the US view prevailed in the working meetings and were adopted, but this happened and happen as of today in all the UN framework; Cfr. WITTNER, L., *American intervention in Greece, 1943-1949*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1982, p.256.

⁷⁷ UNSCOB also provided some valuable material for anti-communist propaganda. Possibly UNSCOB findings may have lost something in some eyes on account of the fact that nine countries whose representatives signed its reports, six were committed Westerns. Two were Latin American, and the other was a well-disposed Asia. But certainly in the area where it counted most – outside the communist bloc – UNSCOB's reports were on the whole accepted at their face value, as fair and impartial accounts of the situation, and the fact that they bore the United Nations' name added to their weight. They therefore served to legitimize the Western's arguments and actions, and were valued accordingly', Cfr. JAMES, A., *The Politics of Peace-Keeping*, New York, Praeger, 1969, p. 213.

at the beginning of organization's life. Other commissions were active in Palestine, Indonesia, India-Pakistan (Kashmir), Korea, Libya, Somaliland, Eritrea. All were set up as consequences of the end of the war and with the necessity to face and solve, when and where possible, the issues related to the territories, decolonization, independence and/or partition.

These investigation bodies provided a basis for more substantial agreement among the members of the organization, and in some cases paved the way to the establishment of real peacekeeping mission. Without the work of UNSCOP, it was unlikely that the Palestine partition plan would have been adopted by UNGA. Similarly, the General Assembly subsequent resolutions on Spain, which asked the recall of ambassadors from franquist Madrid, and Greece would not have received such wide support had it not been for the earlier investigations. The fact that the US acted in Greece and just later in Korea, within the framework of the UN made this approach more acceptable to other governments and their public opinions.

UNSCOB did not imposed a peace between warring parties, however the work of peace observation activities, indirectly bolster the confidence of Greece (despite Athens look for a more consistent and military support from the organization). Despite a controversial beginning, Greece insisted that the Special Committee remained in the country for a year after that the Western powers ascertained that the military situation was stabilized and expressed the willing to withdrew it.⁷⁸ Also the protracted process on investigations of UNSCOB served as example on the *modus operandi* of future peacekeeping missions, giving that a prolonged presence may help to defuse the post-conflict tensions.⁷⁹

The activity of UNSCOB established precedent for future peace observation missions. For the first time observers were posted along the frontiers of a conflict area representing the United Nations than their respective states. The observers had an allegiance toward the international organization despite the sometime divergent lines between the states and the UN, and also with the presence of diplomatic delegates in Athens and Salonika⁸⁰ and this remains the organizational pattern of peace observation under the UN umbrella and led similar approach for other international and regional organizations similar missions.

Per se, the UN operations in the Balkans were not fully innovative, already in October 1925, the LoN dispatched a small military observers mission (formed by British, French and Italian officers) to monitor the withdraw of Greek forces from a border area of Bulgaria in Thrace, after the killing of two Greek military by Bulgarian soldiers. Further, the League sent commission of investigations and inquiry, like in Iraq.⁸¹ The Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incident was the first of several others, which were based on the standard procedures of it. This was for UNSCOP, UNCI, UNCIP.

One of the precedent established for UNSCOB was that UNGA was used to circumvent the stalemate in the Security Council. The General Assembly thus assumed major responsibilities within the framework of the UN for dealing with the more serious threats to peace. It exercised this authority in the cases of Korea and Suez.

⁷⁸ WHAINHOUSE, D. W., *International Peace Observation: a history and forecast*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1966, p. 238.

⁷⁹ The longstanding presence of peacekeeping missions is often reason of criticism from Member States, due to the cost of it. In reality their cost is very limited and the threat to withdrew these missions, like in Kashmir and Cyprus it is used as pressure tool to the parties in order to push them to solve their divide, but till now without results.

⁸⁰ WHAINHOUSE, op. cit, p. 228.

⁸¹ At the Lausanne Conference of 1923, Turkey demanded the return from Iraq the *vilayet* (province) of Mosul (or a part of it) in consideration that the majority of the population was ethnically Turkish. The LoN dispatched a fact-finding mission, which suggested that the territory should be kept as part of Iraq. Despite initial protest, this was subsequently completely accepted by Ankara.

Another aspect of UNSCOB's functioning that was carried over into future UN operations was that the various echelon that dealt with politico-military hotspots was to announced it publicly in the hope that this exposure may had a positive and defusing effects. Making public the violations of Greek sovereignty and the assistance giving to the insurgents by communist states, the UN (and US mainly) hoped that this would led Moscow and proxies would renounce to their efforts to overthrow the Athens government.

The most significant example of this policy occurred in occasion of the self-proclamation of the 'Greek Democratic Provisional Government' by KKE in December 1947. The Special Committee threatened to call a Special Session of the General Assembly if there was evidence of association between Balkan states (and other communist states) and the provisional government, terming that the recognition of the latter meant a grave threat of international peace and security.⁸² It is till now unclear why the Soviet block was reluctant to recognize the KKE-backed 'state', but the potential action announced by the Special Committee, reduced the spilling of the Greek crisis from a local conflict to a full fledged confrontation with major military risks, could be considered the most realistic answer.

UNSCOB was the first example were military (with some inclusion of civilians) observers were deployed on the terrain to observe and report situation by the United Nations.

According to the prevalent doctrine, ongoing since 1948, these operations include two main categories, military observers (after 1956 sometime named as 'blue berets') and formed military units (also after 1956, and named as 'blue helmets'), both without powers of enforcement.

The military observers are commissioned officers.⁸³ The formed units were generally light infantry units equipped with weapons to ensure their self-defence and support services.⁸⁴

The operations must not interfere in the internal affairs of the host countries/territories/*de facto* powers, as the necessity of the continuing support and cooperation of all parties principally concerned remain a pivotal concept.⁸⁵

However, this scheme, ongoing with some exceptions between 1948 and 1991, had a limited impact on many conflicts, not only in the present times where the intra-state confrontations replaced the previous, product of the Cold War, of inter-states ones. Thus, as consequences, the peacekeeping can introduce conciliation efforts,⁸⁶ but cannot solve the political causes of the conflict.⁸⁷ Instead, when there are hopes to succeed through mediation, the parties where more open to cooperate with the international organization and with its presence on the terrain. When instead, the mediation fails, the trend increase among the warring parties to solve by force the divide and, as consequence, consider the UN presence as an impediment to their plans and/or pass through it or simply they ignore it.⁸⁸

These patterns prevailed in UN observation and peacekeeping forces in international conflicts and civil wars alike. In this framework the Greek case was a unique example among the UN

⁸² CAMPBELL, J., 'The Greek Civil War', in EVAN. Luard (ed.), *The International Regulation of Civil Wars*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1972, p.57.

⁸³ Initially they should be majors and above ranks, but the development of the UN operations and the consequent increasing number of personnel deployed, made that the rank of captain is ordinarily accepted.

⁸⁴ The combat support service units were included after the experiences in Somalia and former Yugoslavia, aside with armored units and mechanized infantry, and even field artillery.

⁸⁵ LIU, F. T., *The Blue Helmets: a review of United Nations Peace-keeping*, New York, UN Department of Public Information, 3rd edition, 1985, pp. 3-4.

⁸⁶ There is a line, forwarded by several scholars, among them Santoro, who criticized the rapid deployment of peacekeeping forces, in consideration that the peace-minded intervention impede the victory of the strongest part, initiate and perpetuate the stalemate, Cfr. SANTORO, C. M., *Il sistema di guerra: studi sul bipolarismo*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 1988.

⁸⁷ LIU, op. cit., p. 4.

⁸⁸ The first case was daily matter in the life of UNIFIL between 1978 to 2006 and the second in case of UNIKOM in 2003.

peacekeeping operations, even if at least formally, the international organizations did not included it among this category. The 1947 Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents and UNCCI were the first instances of deployment on UN military personnel. In consideration that the military observers (there were also some civilians, generally seconded by the foreign ministries) acted as members of their national delegations (and not assigned to the UN) comprising these bodies, were not considered officially under the authority of the Secretary-General.⁸⁹

The shortly after established UNC in Korea, similarly was not a UN peacekeeping operation, according the lately emerged general understanding, but was a multinational force authorized by UNGA and set up and led by US.

Similarly to UNSCOB, UNC was not based on the consent of all the parties and established by UNGA as result of the stalemate (or vetoes) at UNSC.

Then it worth mentioning that the term peacekeeping does not exist in the UN Charter and it was used when UNGA established UNEF (again to escape the vetoes at UNSC, this time from UK and France), following the Suez crisis on October 1956.⁹⁰

Thus, the first UN peacekeeping mission with military observers under the authority of the Secretary-General, was UNTSO, established in Palestine 1948.⁹¹ Many others were established in accordance of same principles: UNMOGIP in 1949, UNOGIL in 1958, UNYOM in 1963, UNIPOM and DOMREP in 1965. Only UNTSO and UNMOGIP are still operational.

The conciliation, which however proved already in Greece not provide results either on the field than at central level as it was the Conciliation Committee launched by Evatt, was a way pursued by the UN also for the Arab-Israeli conflict. UNCCP or Palestine Conciliation Commission was created by UNGAR 194 (III) of 11 December 1948, in order to mediate in the Arab-Israeli conflict succeeded the assassinated UN mediator General Count Folke Bernadotte. UNCCP consisted of delegates from France, Turkey and US. Its HQ was set up in Jerusalem on 24 January 1949 (co-located with the one of UNTSO, in the 'Governor House', former residence, as per the name, of the British Governor of the Mandate of Palestine). The commission, which confirmed the split between the concept of mediation and the work of monitoring a truce, met from 12 to 25 February 1949 separately with Israeli and Arab governments, from 21 March in Beirut with the Palestinian Arab refugee delegation, and on 7 April in Tel Aviv with Israeli PM David Ben-Gurion. Then, it proposed the Lausanne Conference of 1949. After the failure of that conference, UNCCP continued for some more years, but did not achieve any significant success, due the irreconcilable positions of the parties and despite the activation subsidiary bodies like the 'Committee on Jerusalem' (a. k. a. the 'Special Committee') and the UN Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East (for examining the economic situation in the countries affected by the hostilities in Palestine and with making recommendations to UNCCP).

A comparison could be made between UNSCOB and these missions, especially the ones which operated in a situation of intra-state conflict, UNOGIL, UNYOM and DOMREP. The observation activities in Greece, as unique case, had some remembrance to the other missions and some of the lesson learned in the Balkans were applied to the observation mission that followed.

As above-mentioned, aside to the operations formed by unarmed military observers, the UN dispatched mission with troops, like in Sinai (UNEF, between 1956-1967 and when another

⁸⁹ WAINHOUSE, op. cit.

⁹⁰ RIKHYE, I. J., 'Peacekeeping and Peacemaking' in WISEMAN, H., *Peacekeeping: appraisals and proposals*, New York, Pergamon Press, 1983, p. 6.

⁹¹ The day of the activation of the first official UN peacekeeping mission, 29 May 1948, was designated by the General Assembly in 2002 as International Day of UN peacekeepers.

one was again re-deployed there between 1973-1979 and named UNEF II), ONUC (1960-1964), UNSF/UNTEA (1962-1963), UNFICYP (1964 to the present), UNDOF (1973 to the present) and UNIFIL (1978 to the present). These forces have also acted in civil wars like in former Belgian Congo, Cyprus and Lebanon. UNIFIL was originally mandate to interpose between Lebanon and Israel, operated in complex civil war where forces from Syria, Lebanese regular and irregular, Palestinian militias, multinational forces carried out different profiles.⁹² These mission over numbered the ones of observers, sometimes included within.⁹³ But the major difference was that these missions were armed military forces, assigned to prevent or implement actions accordingly UNSC's resolutions. Also the operational profile is totally different: the peacekeeping troops control, protect and garrison ceasefire lines and buffer zones between sides, while the observers, as unarmed military personnel, monitor, investigate, report and occasionally supervise.

After the Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents of early 1947, the second UN-led military investigation took place in Indonesia, where the Netherland forces confronted the armed independentism movement, after the failure of the independence agreement of March 1947. UNSC, in early August, got the parties to agree to a ceasefire. A few weeks later, it set up two bodies: the Consular Commission, to report on observance of the ceasefire, and the UNGOC to help negotiations towards a final settlement. The Consular Commission was formed by a group of military observers from the defense attachés offices of those Member States of the Security Council that had a consular representation in Batavia/Jakarta (Australia, Belgium, China, France, UK, US). The Consular Commission, named UNCCI, was the first established body by the UN specifically mandated to monitor the ceasefire,⁹⁴ which was broken in several occasions. In January 1949, UNSC renamed UNGOC as UNCI, but retained names and functions of UNCCI, which at time counted around 70 military observers, an extremely limited number in consideration of the forces of parties and huge area of operation.

The military observers in the Dutch East Indies/Indonesia had the multiples functions, which later marked the life of them later and elsewhere like demarcation and observation of ceasefires lines and areas, investigation and report of ceasefires violations, and supervision of troop cantonments, deployment and/or withdrawal. Finally, in November 1949, the Netherlands and the pro-independence movement of Indonesia agreed to the transfer of sovereignty and UNCI with the support of UNCCI supervised it and monitored the full withdrawal of Dutch forces and the disarmament and demobilization of the pro-Netherland local forces till the beginning of 1951, when both ceased their activities.

Similarly to UNSCOB, also UNCI/UNCCI experience was not included in the historiography of the official peacekeeping for the same reason of the first and it was the dependency of the personnel. In fact the military observers in Indonesia answered at prima facie to their own consul in Batavia/Jakarta and from the received the instructions about their duties and tasks.

However, their functions were very similar to those performed by all the other UN-led peacekeeping observers missions.⁹⁵

The British mandate of Palestine saw the deployment of another observers group, also in this case, their deployment was the result of the decolonization and consequences of decisions of

⁹² MNF, later MNF I, after the establishment of the MNF II, comprised troops from US, France and Italy; MNFII had the same participants of MNF I plus a small British contingent.

⁹³ The 'blue helmets' in the former Belgian Congo, now DRC, the largest mission since then activated, counted more than 20,000 troops.

⁹⁴ When the case of Greece was brought to the attention of UNSC in early 1947, there was no unanimity and as consequence, no call for a ceasefire or for the establishment of a body to enforce and/or monitor it.

⁹⁵ WISEMANN, H., 'UN peacekeeping: an Historical Overview', in WISEMANN, H. (ed.), *Peacekeeping: Appraisals and Proposals*, Pergamon Press, New York, 1983, p. 6.

WWI-era and was prepared by the fact-finding mission. The multiple post-WWII conflict in Palestine between Arab, Jewish populations and British forces led to a political stalemate, which obliged London to refer it to the United Nations. In May 1947, UNGA established UNSCOP to investigate and submit proposals for the solution of the crisis. UNSCOP in the structure had many points in common with UNSCOB, starting with the composition, with members (and alternates) from member States and a small secretariat formed by UN staff. Due the complexity of the issue and the polarization of the members, there were established subsidiary organs, like UNSCOB and Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents.

UNSCOP arrived in Palestine on June 15, 1947. While the Jewish Agency and the Jewish National Council cooperated with UNSCOP in its deliberations, the Arab Higher Committee charged UNSCOP with being pro-Zionist, and decided to boycott. When visiting Jewish areas, committee members were warmly welcomed; despite the official boycott, several Arab officials and intellectuals privately met committee members. In July, they travelled to Lebanon and Transjordan (now Jordan) and in August left to Geneva, where the final report was prepared. UNSCOP's report was reflected in UNGA's adoption of the partition resolution of November 1947 (33 votes to 13, with 10 abstentions). The Arabs, who asking a unitary state rejected it, Israeli accepted and UK, not willing to enforce a solution, withdrew its forces on May 1948. The continuous combats on the ground bring the case to attention to UNSC, which established a Truce Commission in April 1948. The UNTC was another consular commission from those Member States of the Council that had career consuls in Jerusalem, (US, France, Belgium, Sweden) assisted by military personnel from the same countries.⁹⁶

On 20 May 1948, the General Count Folke Bernadotte from Sweden was appointed as UN Mediator.⁹⁷ His appointment coincided with the final withdrawal of the British forces and the proclamation of the State of Israel, which broken up a full scale war between the new state and its four neighbours (Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Transjordan) plus Iraq. The Council made up an urgent call to the Members States of UNTC and the number of military observers grew up rapidly up to 600 (plus a number of ancillary personnel, in majority provided by the US, initiating thus the set-up of a meritorious and almost unknown body, the UNFS). On 29 May 1948, UNSC in resolution 50 (1948) the Truce Commission was transformed in UNTSO and

⁹⁶ 'The Security Council,

Referring to its resolution 46 (1948) of 17 April 1948 calling upon all parties concerned to comply With specific attempts for a truce in Palestine,

Establishes a Truce Commission for Palestine composed of representatives of those members of the Security Council which have career consular officers in Jerusalem, noting, however, that the representative of Syria has indicated that his Government is not prepared to serve on the Commission. The function of the Commission shall be to assist the Security Council in supervising the implementation by the parties of its resolution 46 (1948);

Requests the Commission to report to the President of the Security Council within four days regarding its activities and the development of the situation, and subsequently to keep the Security Council currently informed with respect thereto.

The Commission, its members, their assistants and its personnel shall be entitled to travel, separately or together, wherever the Commission deems necessary to carry out its tasks.

The Secretary-General shall furnish the Commission with such personnel and assistance as it may require taking into account the special urgency of the situation with respect to Palestine.'

Cfr. S/727, UN SC Resolution 48 of 23 April 1948.

⁹⁷ Cfr. A/RES/186 (S-2), 14 May 1948, Appointment and terms of reference of a United Nations Mediator in Palestine.

the observers continued to the supervision of demilitarized zones, observation of ceasefire agreements and investigation of border violations.⁹⁸

The fourth observation mission established in the turbulent late '40s, operating in a post-colonial background like the ones in Indonesia and Palestine, was UNMOGIP. This operation, like UNTSO, continue its functions as of today and evolved like the others from a UNSC investigation body.

The core of the problem between India and Pakistan was (as it is today) the mountainous region of Kashmir. When Great Britain granted independence to India and Pakistan in 1946, violent armed clashes erupted in the former princely state in order to take the control over it.

With the intensification of hostilities, the Security Council, with UNSCR 39 (1948) established the UNCIP, tasked to investigate the issues and mediate between the two countries. Following the cease-fire of hostilities. The Commission was formed by five members, (Czechoslovakia, Argentina, Belgium, Colombia and US) and its secretariat was headed by the Norwegian ambassador to the UK.⁹⁹

UNCIP suffered, differently from other contemporary mission, of the mutual and persistent hostility of both sides upon its arrival in the subcontinent in July a group of military observers supported 1948. The Commission, which made three visits to the subcontinent between 1948 and 1949. On 13 August 1948, after discussions with both the governments, the Commission unanimously adopted a three-part resolution, amending and amplifying the UNSCR 47 (1948).¹⁰⁰ These:

Part I dealt with ceasefire, calling for a complete cessation of hostilities.

Part II dealt with a truce agreement. (It asked for a complete withdrawal of Pakistan's fighting forces, including the army, tribes and other Pakistani nationals, and stated that the evacuated territory would be administered by local authorities under the surveillance of the Commission. Following the Pakistani withdrawal, India was expected to withdraw the "bulk of its forces" reducing them to the minimum level required for maintaining law and order).

Part III stated that, after the acceptance of the truce agreement, the two countries would enter into consultation with the Commission for settling the future of the state in accordance with the will of the people.¹⁰¹ The proposals were accepted by India and rejected by Pakistan, which labeled it as punitive and unfair.

In July 1949, India and Pakistan signed the Karachi Agreement establishing a ceasefire line to be supervised by the UN military observers. These observers, under the command of the Military Adviser, formed the core of the future UNMOGIP.

The behaviour of the parties led the Commission declared its failure and submitted its final report to the Security Council on 9 December 1949. It recommended that the Commission be replaced by a single mediator; that the problem of demilitarization be viewed as a whole without the required sequentially of the August resolution; that the UN representatives should have the authority settle issues by arbitration. The Czechoslovakian delegate submitted a minority report contending that the Commission's declaration of failure was premature, that the problem of 'Azad' forces had been underrated, and that the 'Northern Areas' did not receive adequate attention.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ UNTSO personnel have also been progressively available at short notice to form the nucleus of a number of other peacekeeping operations on a temporary basis, operating like a IEF for those. The ability of UNTSO military observers to deploy rapidly after the Security Council acted to establish a new operation has been an important factor contributing to the initial effectiveness of such missions. Further, only the UN Secretary-General has the authority to terminate UNTSO, as well UNMOGIP, and their continuation is no more prerogative of the Council.

⁹⁹ RAKESH, A., *Kashmir, 1945–66: From Empire to the Cold War*, University of Southampton, 2014, p. 69.

¹⁰⁰ Cfr. S/726.

¹⁰¹ Cfr. S/1100, 1st Interim Report, UNCIP, 22 Nov. 1948, S/1196, 2nd Interim Report, 10 Jan. 1949.

¹⁰² GUPTA, D., *Jammu and Kashmir*, Leyden, Martinus Nijhoff Publisher, 1968, pp. 150-1.

The Council asked its Canadian delegate, General A. G. L. McNaughton, to informally consult India and Pakistan towards a de-militarization plan. In the course of his discussion, on 22 December 1949, McNaughton proposed that both Pakistani and Indian forces should be reduced to a minimum level, followed by the disbandment of local and irregular forces. India *de facto* rejected the McNaughton proposals, which were instead adopted by the Council with the UNSCR 80 (1949) and appointed a mediator. The mediation also ended in failure. After the termination of the UNCIP, the Council passed UNSCR 91 (1951) and established the UNMOGIP to observe and report violations of ceasefire. UNMOGIP still function in that unstable area, where large scale hostilities erupted in 1965 and 1971 and recently in Kashmir the tensions between the two states reemerged with border clashes, coinciding especially after the election of the ultra-nationalist PM of India, Narendra Modi in May 2014.

Another post WWII hotspot was the Korean peninsula. Differently from UNSCOB, the Korean file was managed since the beginning by the General Assembly. On 14 November 1947, the Assembly passed UNGAR 112 (II), which created UNTCOK, whose mandate was to supervise free and open elections, assist in the withdrawal of the US and USSR occupying forces (there since August-September 1945), and guide the new political entity to re-assume the full independence, lost in 1908 when it was annexed by Japan.¹⁰³ Forbidden by USSR from entering the zone occupied by its troops which occupied the country from the Soviet-Chinese borders down to the 38th parallel, UNTCOK could not carry out its mandate and subsequently¹⁰⁴ recommended that elections be held in the US-occupied south and that the winner there be recognized as the sole legitimate Korean government, despite a strong opposition from Australia, Canada and Syria delegates).

On 14 November 1947, while the Assembly passed UNGAR 112 (II) recognizing the "rightful claims of the people of Korea to independence". The resolution established a UNTCOK and tasked it to travel, observe and hold consultations throughout Korea to oversee which Koreans would be allowed to participate. The language of the resolution seemed to treat the Korean people as one nation and set as its purpose the independence of that nation. But the action of sending the commission could also be seen as an intervention in the internal affairs of the Korean people and a road block to their independence. When the UNTCOK commission arrived in Seoul it adopted a resolution "that the sphere of this Commission is the whole of Korea and not merely a section". It immediately found two obstacles. First, the USSR stood firm therefore UNTCOK could not consult or observe in the Soviet-controlled zone. Second, and similarly, the situation in the US-controlled zone meant UNTCOK could not consult with most leftist parties due to the suppression of left wing activity by the US military government.¹⁰⁵

Despite the suppression, many groups and some leftists did convey to the Commission their opposition to creating a separate South Korean state. After less than one month in Korea, UNTCOK decided it could not observe a national election and should report this back to the General Assembly. For the US, the UN was crucial to its plans to be able to have a presence on the Asian mainland while also able to withdraw its troops from Korea. UNTCOK was forced, by the situation, to ignore the North-South political conference.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ The Member States of UNTCOK were Australia, Canada, Syria, US, France, El Salvador, India, the Philippines, China, Ukraine SSR. Like in UNSCOB, Ukraine despite invited, did never attend the work of the Commission or dispatched its diplomatic personnel. Cfr. – The History of the United Nations Forces in the Korean War, Vol. II, Ministry of national Defense, Republic of Korea, Seoul, 1973, pp. 19-23.

¹⁰⁴ Also due its strength, limited to 35 members altogether, with the mixture of diplomats provided by Member States and staffer from the UN Secretariat similarly saw for UNSCOB.

¹⁰⁵ The US military government banned the Korean Communist Party in May 1946.

¹⁰⁶ Called by a strange left and conservative southern leaders coalition as a step toward forming a national government and took place in Pyongyang in late April.

By then UNTCOK no longer had any capacity to support a unification process. The election was held on 10 May 1948, accompanied by a boycott by many center and left parties and by continuing anti-election and anti-opposition violence. Despite serious limits, like the presence of overwhelming evidence of coercion and military control of the election process and no action in the pro-USSR area, UNTCOK sent its report to the General Assembly calling the election as a valid expression of the free will of the electorate of those parts of Korea, which were made accessible to the Commission.

The election originated the permanent division of the peninsula in two hostile governments. Even after high level consultations, the US failed to convince Australia and Canada to drop their opposition to a partial election. But UNTCOK was sent back to implement the program that had been meant for the whole peninsula but now only in the southern zone. These events represent the failure of what appeared to be the original General Assembly intent, which seemed to be the end of the zonal occupation and division of Korea and the emergence of a national Korean state. The creation of ROK in the US zone was followed shortly by the creation of DPRK in the Soviet zone. UNTCOK, out of the willing and wishes of the General Assembly, had thus helped solidify a division of Korea, which haunts the world until today.

In December 1948, the General Assembly debated the Korean question. USSR and its proxies argued strenuously for an invitation to the DPRK to participate in the debate. They fought against accepting UNTCOK's endorsement of the 10 May election, but as it was normal in those times, they were defeated. The result was the adoption of UNGAR 195 (III) of 12 December 1948, which acknowledge ROK as a "lawful government". To achieve majority approval, the resolution did not call the ROK a national government nor recommend recognition of it by UN member states. But the US and the ROK and their allies sited this resolution in support of ROK's claim to be the only legitimate government in Korea and therefore entitled to UN membership representing all of Korea.¹⁰⁷

With UNGAR 195 (III), UNTCOK's recommendations for a follow up entity, with the same multilateral nature, were accepted and it was created UNCOK.¹⁰⁸ Its mission was to expedite the withdrawal of occupying forces and to assist the new government in unifying the country and removing economic, social and other barriers. UNCOK was able to assist in the departure of the occupying forces, but had little success when it came to furthering Korean unification and, indeed, on 9 September 1948 North Korea declared its own separate nationhood, named DPRK. As a result UNGAR 293 (IV) of 21 October 1949, UNCOK's mandate was changed including a military element, adding the task of observing and reporting on any developments "which might lead to or otherwise involve military conflict in Korea". In time, this became UNCOK's primary role, and its minuscule group of military observers part of the mission; thus, they were the first who reported the North Korean invasion of the South on 25 June 1950 (the two military observers each requested by UN to Australia and Canada on 7 March 1950 arrived at the end of May). It was their report that led the UNSC to authorize the use of force to beat back the North Korean forces. Despite the outbreak of fighting, UNCOK remained in existence and its task continued to be to submit reports, observe the mandated North Korean withdrawal, and to keep the Council informed of the progress of the implementation of its resolution.

¹⁰⁷ Cfr. HAUBEN, J., *The UN Role in Korea in the Division of the Korean Nation: Nov 14, 1947- May 10, 1948*, Cfr. <http://www.columbia.edu/~hauben/Korea/UN-Role-in-Korean-Division-Nov14.txt> Consulted on 14 September 2017.

¹⁰⁸ The membership of UNCOK was the same of UNTCOK.

UNCOK, which followed the development of UNC operations, and saw the increase of its military personnel, was strongly blamed by the communist media outlets to conduct torture and interrogations on the DPRK soldiers and Chinese 'volunteers'.¹⁰⁹

Coinciding with the counteroffensive of UNC which entered in DPRK territory, UNCOK was officially terminated on 7 October 1950 when the General Assembly created the UNCURK, this in the light of the promising result of the military action, which would led to the unification of the peninsula.¹¹⁰

The Canadian military observers of UNCOK were transferred to UNCURK when that mission stood up and continued their reports, even if Canada was not more part of the Commission.¹¹¹

UNCURK was still meant to facilitate the creation of a unified, democratic Korea (until the Chinese intervention ended the prospect of holding elections in the north), but also assist in relief and rehabilitation. UNCURK took over the military observers of UNCOK and used them as liaison personnel with UNC. During the war, the Commission exerted a moderating influence over the US-led UNC and on ROK government. UNCURK remained in existence until 1973 when it was disbanded.

The UN Commissions for Eritrea, Somaliland and Libya were set up with the task to solve the problems of the Italian colonies in Africa, all put under BMA, and were formed exclusively by diplomats without military personnel tasked to observe, report and suggest options. For all, it was just a formality because colonies of a defeated power of Axis, the fate was agreed in principle for the self-determination. The major problem was in how to implement it.

All these cases made the Greek case as unique one. Not only is the case itself different from the others, but its peculiarity led UNSCOB observers to follow a different path, that had different levels of achievements and failures. The Greek case was a civil war, while the others were international conflicts (Korea case included). While the other conflicts where the result of colonization and foreign occupation, the case of Greece, originally born internally to the persistent divisions of this country, evolved into a cold war case, like it was for Korea.

There was an important presence, in the decision-making system of the organization, of the Assembly and a growing relevance of the Council, but in areas where the polarization East-West was not a major element of the file. Greece and Korea, due to the vetoes of USSR moved to UNGA, while the Council operated for India/Pakistan, Netherlands East

Indies/Indonesia, Palestine/Israel. Those missions were in border areas and territories and ceasefire lines. UNSCOB (and UNTCOK) had limitations in their operations in consideration that the other side (in both cases tied with Moscow hegemonic projects) did not allowed the UN personnel to carry out their activities in states and *de facto* territories.

¹⁰⁹ Cfr. LONDEY, P., *Other People's Wars. A history of Australian peacekeeping*, Allen & Unwin, 2004, p. 34-7; MAGNANI, E., 'The coalition warfare within the United Nations framework, the case of UN Command in Korean War', in *The Joint and Combined Approach in Military Operations in the XX and XXI Centuries, Joint and combined operations in the history of warfare*, a paper presented to the 39th International Congress of Military History, Turin, Italy 1-6 September 2013, Acta: Rome, Italian Armed Forces Central Staff, 2014, pp.550-7.

¹¹⁰ The British Colonel Alfred G. Katzin was the Personal Representative of the UN Secretary-General to the UNC and Chairperson of UNCOK and UNCURK, which, differently from UNSCOB were the chairmanship was internal and rotational among the Member States participants; before it Katzin, which had South African origin, was the Deputy Director General of UNRRA and later the first Under Secretary-General of the organization till 1968 when he retired.

¹¹¹ The Member States of UNCURK where Australia, Chile, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Thailand, the Philippines and Turkey. All those countries, except Chile and Pakistan, had military forces operating within UNC.

Further, the transfer of Greek issue from the Council to the Assembly was obstructed in all the possible ways by the Communist states. The Special Committee had no ceasefire to supervise, no mediatory role to fulfill, no armistice commissions to chair (like India/Pakistan, Netherlands East Indies/Indonesia, Palestine/Israel; the one in Korea is a bilateral body where seat a multinational force which implemented the Chapter VII). The highly ideological conflict in Greece, reduced the room of UNSCOB range of action with forces that the government of Athens for years was not able to control. Moreover, and related to it, the Special Committee was not recognized by these forces nor by Greece's northern neighbours. The peculiarity of UNSCOB emerge comparing this mission with other observation missions related to internal conflicts, like UNOGIL, UNYOM and DOMREP.

UNSCOB, UNOGIL and UNYOM saw their action in dealing exclusively with the official authorities of the territories where they operated and avoiding contacts with the element opposing the governments. They should observe the international aspects of these conflicts while a dialogue and interaction with the internal components of it were excluded. Due to this limited range of action, their outcome was limited. The Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents and DOMREP tried to inquire on the internal elements (and reasons) of the crisis, mediate between contenders and obtained different results.

However, all of it had in common to avoid external military actions. This was true only for UNSCOB; In Yemen, the 'blue helmets' did not impeded the Egyptian forces support the republican regime, in Dominican Republic the US and pan-american troops of OAS/OEA took the control of the territory, but the local factions blocked the freedom of movement of UN staff.

UNOGIL did not impeded Syrian subversive infiltrations and only massive landing of US forces finally created the politico-military framework that allowed to the UN mission to operate properly.

In Lebanon the delicate constitutional balance between ethnic, religious groups, economic and social interests was endangered by the follow-up of the Suez crisis (November 1956).

The proposed re-election of the incumbent President Camille Chamoun open a latent crisis which rapidly move to a civil war, with intromission of pro-Nasser actions. Like in Greece, the government of Lebanon seized the UNSC lodging a complaint against Egypt, blamed to support the armed insurgency. In June 1958 UNSC dispatched an observers mission, UNOGIL. The mandate of the mission was not to prohibit infiltration (the observers were unarmed as usual and in limited number) and there was the opinion that the presence of UN personnel would deter the infiltration of activists and weapons from Syria.¹¹² However, this did not happened. In mid-July, the Lebanese government formally request the direct military aid of US, while a pro-Nasserist coup remove the filo-Western monarchy in Iraq and on 15 July with the operation 'Blubat' thousands of US soldiers arrived in Beirut. With the US support, even without direct involvement, the Lebanese government overcome the crisis and UNOGIL increased sharply personnel and assets in the monitoring activities on the Syrian border.¹¹³

In October of 1958 the US forces left Beirut and one month later the 'blue helmets' left Lebanon as well after reaching the peak of the mission strength with 479 military observers and staff officers, 122 uniformed personnel in support of ground and air operations, 18 aircraft, six helicopters and 290 vehicles, and 49 permanently manned border posts of all types.¹¹⁴

¹¹² Cfr. LIU, op.cit., p. 180.

¹¹³ Cfr. 'UN Observation Group in Lebanon: Aerial Surveillance During a Civil War, 1958', in DORN, W. (ed), *Air Power in UN Operations: Wings of Peace*, Farnham, Ashgate Publishing, 2014, pp.135–145.

¹¹⁴ Cfr. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unogilbackgr.html>, consulted on 16 February 2017.

In order to complete the analysis of impact of UNOGIL in the Middle East region, British forces intervened in Transjordan on the request of the local government in order to avoid a pro-Nasser coup; then, due to the refusal, by the UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld at the request of Transjordan to dispatch military observer on the border with Syria, the British forces were replaced by the first fully civilian-manned observation mission, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Jordan, which operated till June 1967 and was led by the Italian diplomat Pier Pasquale Spinelli.¹¹⁵

In basic terms, UNSCOB and UNOGIL had a key point in common: the observation of the borders of a state involved in civil strife; UNOGIL was the second case in this specific point in the then short history of UN and it got, as the first case the indirect support, which represented the real deterrent against external hostile infiltrations, of foreign military forces, close to the local government.

Also the smallest UN observer mission ever deployed during a civil war, the one in Dominican Republic, had elements to comparison with UNSCOB. Following a coup against the military junta in April 1965, fighting erupted. On 28 April a OAS/OEA-mandated, and US-led, multinational force.¹¹⁶

In May UNSC voted that a fact-finding representative, accompanied by some military observers must be sent in the island and on the compliance of the warring factions to the ceasefire.

The parties while formally cooperated with DOMREP, limited the freedom of movement of the mission and denied the access to several areas under their control. The UN due to this kind of limitation and the very limited strength (the mission counted the Special Representative, its Military Adviser, three military observers and some civilian support staff) played a limited role. One similarity between UNSCOB and DOMREP was that both operated in two areas which were considered of vital strategic interest of Moscow (Greece) and Washington (the Caribbean), with all the political implications that it means. Differently with UNSCOB, DOMREP had not received the mandate to monitor the border but instead to monitor the implementation of the ceasefire within the state. The situation move the mission to monitor the internal situation on the country, creating an innovative precedent. DOMREP left the island in October 1966 after the monitoring of the withdrawal of IAPF.

In 1954, the end of Indochina war, the withdrawal of French forces from the region and the establishment of independent states left open a *vacuum* which the USSR-backed North Vietnam try to occupy infiltrating military personnel and supporting the local communist movements in Cambodia, South Vietnam and Laos. In Laos it was re-proposed a similar scenario than in Greece. Laos had accused troops from North Vietnam of crossing its shared border and undertaking military attacks against Laos, supporting the communist movement Pateth-Lao and submitted a request of action by the UNSC. The Council with UNSCR 132 (XIV), adopted on 7 September 1959, decided to appoint a sub-committee consisting of delegates from Argentina, Italy, Japan and Tunisia (which seat in the Council), and instructed it to examine statements made before the Council concerning Laos and to receive further statements and documents, and make inquiries and report to the Council as soon as possible (It was the only resolution adopted by the Security Council in 1959 and was voted by ten votes to one against, from the Soviet Union.). The sub-committee, after a visit on the terrain, assisted by a small team of military observers detached from UNTSO, concluded that the

¹¹⁵ Cfr. BLACKWELL, S., *British Military Intervention and the Struggle for Jordan: King Hussein, Nasser and the Middle East Crisis, 1955–1958*, London, Routledge, 2013.

¹¹⁶ The IAPF was established by OAS on 23 May 1965, after US's intervention in the Dominican Republic. It consisted of 42,600 US personnel, plus 1,130 from Brazil, 250 from Honduras, 184 from Paraguay, 160 from Nicaragua, 21 military policemen from Costa Rica, 3 staff officers from El Salvador.

crossings were of a guerilla nature and it could not be clearly established that North Vietnamese troops were responsible even if admitted that there were areas where they could not visit.¹¹⁷

The '60s saw other UN observer missions.

UNYOM had a no results, due the impossible tasks. A pro-Nasserist military coup in September 1962 against the religious-politico authority in the North Yemen, represented by quasi-monarchist role of the Imam, led to a civil war. The two factions were respectively supported by Egypt (the republican) and Saudi Arabia (the imamists). Egypt dispatched up to 40.000 troops and allegedly used chemical attacks against the other faction. In June 1963 the Council dispatched an observer mission mandated to monitor the disengagement agreement reached by the two sides (and their foreign allies) and the withdrawal of the Egyptian and other foreign forces. The Mission also should monitor the cessation of support activities in favor of imamists in Saudi Arabia. For this, UNYOM, aside with a too small contingent of 25 observers, was also equipped with a recce company (from Yugoslavia) and a small air unit (from Canada). The situation on the terrain was uneasy, starting from the obstacles of the parties to the work of the UN operation. In September 1964 Egypt and Saudi Arabia ceased to pay the cost of the mission, UNYOM ended and the civil war continued till 1970.¹¹⁸ (48)

The two major stakeholder of the crisis, Egypt and Saudi Arabia did not feel reassured by the UN presence, making this mission similar to the lack of effectiveness of UNOGIL into deter infiltrations from Syria. The limited strength of the mission, in comparison with size of the area of operation, hardship of terrain and weather contributed to the inefficacy of it. Unlike in Greece and Lebanon, the civil war continued brutally without UN observation.

After Indonesia was granted the independence in 1949, the Netherlands kept the control of West Irian (or West New Guinea), despite the strong opposition of Jakarta. This situation originated endless frictions between the two countries. In the summer of 1962 the Netherlands and Indonesia, with the good offices of US, agreed on Dutch withdrawal and transfer of the area, under the aegis of the UN. It was established UNTEA, which included not only civilian elements but also a group of 22 military observers. UNTEA included a security force, the UNSF, formed by a reinforced Pakistani battalion and air units from Canada and US. UNTEA administered the area for the transition period and in May 1963 the region become part officially of Indonesia. UNTEA example showed that the military observers require the presence of a military force to enforce the Council (or Assembly) decisions. The success of the mission was essentially due to the spirit of cooperation of the parties and the accord broker (the US), all elements absent in UNSCOB.

This new situation introduced in the international arena other decisive elements, like the exacerbation of ideological conflict of the Cold War and the polarization between East and West, which invested massively the life and functioning of the UN. In consideration of the determination of the Great Powers to act in what they considered areas of vital interest, the room for the UN intervention as the sole tool to solve crisis (often in their worst scenario, like civil wars) was limited.

The UN intervention in former Belgian Congo represented a major shift of the policy of the organization (and its decision making body, the Council) *vis-à-vis* civil wars. There were no

¹¹⁷ Cfr. 'US will ask UN study of facts, in Laos', Chicago Tribune, Chicago, 7 September 1959; Cfr. *Note from Australian Permanent Mission to UN to PM Office*, Canberra, 8 September 1959, Cfr. <https://pmtranscripts.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/original/00000101.pdf> , consulted on 16 September 2017.

¹¹⁸ Cfr. <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/past/unyomfacts.html> , consulted on 16 February 2017.

more only unarmed observers, but a large military force, also equipped by a multinational wing of combat aircraft.¹¹⁹

Similarly, the UN Mission dispatched in Cyprus, UNFICYP, included formed military units which garrisoned the territory and interposed between the militias of the two opposed communities, supported, like in former Belgian Congo, by police personnel. The deployment of UNEF, ONUC and UNFICYP, despite a non-fully positive outcome, reduced the already limited range of action of observation missions.

¹¹⁹ DORN, W. (ed), *op. cit.*

Chapter 8

The Conciliation Committee for Greece, the allied-enemy of UNSCOB¹²⁰

The UNSCOB began its work in Greece in November 1947 and did not concluded its efforts until 1951, when the Greek guerrillas had been militarily defeated since two years and the situation along the northern frontiers had changed basically, as it did especially after the Yugoslav crisis with COMINFORM on summer 1948.

The northern neighbors of Greece (Yugoslavia included), in line with Soviet policy, refused to cooperate with the Special Committee, with the result that its work was largely confined to observation. Despite openly mandated by the General Assembly, in reality the UNSCOB the role into assist the four Governments in any effort at conciliation was ineffective, but especially the US refused to accept any change in the mandate of the Committee.

In its Report to the General Assembly on 30 June 1948, the Special Committee¹²¹ declared that, as long as the northern neighbors provided support to the Greek guerrillas, the independence and integrity of Greece would be under threat. But, despite the refusal of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to cooperate with it and their challenge to its legitimacy, the Special Committee was convinced that it would be possible to assist the four Governments toward a peaceful settlement in the interest of all, if Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, like Greece, were prepared to cooperate in line the spirit and the letter of the resolution of 21 October 1947 and in the spirit of the UN Charter. The 3rd General Assembly continued the Committee in its resolution of 27 November 1948.¹²²

However appeared clear, at least to some stakeholders, that this stalemate was untenable.

During the 3rd General Assembly, on the initiative of President, Herbert Vere Evatt, the Minister of External Affairs of Australia, also decided to establish a Conciliation Committee specifically tasked to help to solve this crisis. It should be remember that the Australian delegation expressed some objections on the mandate of UNSCOB and this move is in line with the need of demand of visibility of this country after WWII. On 10 November, the Commission, established during the 276th meeting of the 1st Committee (Political Affairs), was led by the same Evatt.

The US delegation, led by the Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, was openly against to Australian' initiative, largely on two major grounds. The first one was that UNSCOB was already charged to deal with problems of conciliation and was certainly more competent in the light of its year's experience than an ad hoc group like the one which Evatt had proposed. The second was even more politically-based; in fact, as long as there were no change in USSR policy in the Balkans, and especially with regard to Greece, the exercise in conciliation was altogether likely to prove fruitless. However, it was considered not useful, for the US and Western interests, to block the Australian initiative and the Commission saw the approval of the 1st Committee and of the plenary.

¹²⁰ This chapter was not originally planned, but the researches carried out on the nature and work of UNSCOB, made the role of this body relevant, especially in the light to disclose how was complicate, and often contradictory, the UN-led machinery established to solve, or alleviate (in a minimal reading) the crisis in the Balkans. The establishment and the activities of the Conciliation Committee for Greece underlined that the United Nations, since the beginning of its existence was a political body, and, as all the political bodies, its action often answer to peculiar dynamics.

¹²¹ Cfr. A/574, 30 June 1948, 1st Report of UNSCOB, Annex 4.

¹²² Cfr. UNGAR 193 (III), par A, 27 Nov. 1948.

The Conciliation Committee established also methods and procedures with the representatives of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia looking toward a settlement of their difficulties.¹²³

The Conciliation Committee was composed of the President of the General Assembly (Herbert Vere Evatt) who lead it, the Secretary-General (Trygve Lie), the Chairman of the 1st Committee (Belgian Foreign Minister Paul Henri Spaak), and the Rapporteur (Ambassador Selim Sarper, Perm. Rep. of Turkey). They were 'to act in the capacity of conciliatories jointly to convene immediately in Paris (Palais de Chaillot, where was temporary located the General Assembly) a meeting of representatives of the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia to explore the possibilities of reaching agreement amongst themselves as to the methods and procedure to be adopted with a view to resolving present difficulties between them.'

The Evatt efforts essentially began two days later, on November 12, when conversations were held with representatives of the four governments (Greece, Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia). Evatt explained that he was trying to achieve something in the way of resolving controversies. The representatives of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia indicated somewhat vaguely that they were interested in resolving these differences, as did the Permanent Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Panagiotis Pipinelis of Greece. However, he made it clear that the Greek Government would not tolerate any interference in Greek internal affairs. Ales Bebler, Deputy Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia, despite the bitter politico-ideological crisis ongoing with USSR and allied states, repeated the Soviet stance on the issue, saying that the US and the UK were using Greece as a base of operations in the Balkan area, wondered whether the question might not be brought before the Council of Foreign Ministers and whether Greece might not be 'neutralized' under the UN control. But he did not respond when Evatt inquired whether Yugoslavia might be willing to give up its arms under a UN guarantee. The representatives of Albania, Greece and Bulgaria agreed that diplomatic relations should be restored and it was also agreed that ministers should be exchanged between Greece and Yugoslavia.

Following three days of conversations, at the meeting of 15 November 1948, Evatt circulated an eight-point program as first concrete set of suggestions for the solution of problems between Greece and its northern neighbors, listing:

- (1) diplomatic exchanges;
- (2) immediate agreement in principle to draw up new or revised frontier conventions;
- (3) mutual patrols of frontiers;
- (4) assistance of UN observers;
- (5) acceptance of existing frontiers as definitive;
- (6) acceleration of the repatriation of Greek children who had been removed across the order;
- (7) agreement in principle to regulate questions of refugees and minorities once diplomatic relations had been restored; and
- (8) establishment of a small body for good offices or mediation.

There was, however, general scepticism relative to this program, and on the meeting of 17 November, it was somewhat modified, especially in a proposal for mixed frontier commissions, to be composed of a representative of each government under an independent chairman, the commissions to have full access to territories on either side of the border.

¹²³ Cfr. A/728; A/C. 1/380.

Proposals and counter-proposals followed each other to the end of November, although all possessed a certain similarity in the matter of the renewal of diplomatic relations and the establishment of mixed frontier commissions. Albania and Greece, under the proposals, were immediately to negotiate with a view to drawing up a frontier convention.

Despite the mentioned initial scepticism, by the end of November, it appeared that some progress had been made. Nevertheless, on 1 December Evatt submitted three draft bilateral declarations (Greece-Albania, Greece-Bulgaria, Greece-Yugoslavia), based essentially on the 8-points proposals, those received a mixed reception. The common points in all the draft declarations were about the establishment of diplomatic relations, the exchange of ministers/ambassadors, the negotiation of frontier conventions, the patrolling of frontiers and the prevention of incidents, the establishment of mixed frontier commissions and the signature of the declarations. Ales Bebler raised some questions as to mediating authority of the mixed commissions but did not closed the door; the Professor Vladiguero of Bulgaria considered the Greek-Bulgarian draft 'acceptable'; Pipinelis thought the proposed Greek-Bulgarian and Greek-Yugoslav drafts acceptable, but the Greek-Albanian draft proved a stumbling block. The day later appeared clear that Albania would not sign the declaration unless Greece which did not provide a clear renunciation of Athens's claims to 'Northern Epirus'.¹²⁴

On 8 December, a UN spokesperson denied a press report which¹²⁵ stated 'that certain agreements had been reached between the United Nations Conciliation Commission for the Balkans and the Government of Bulgaria', and declared that a published Bulgarian telegram 'was extremely misleading and likely to interfere with the work of the Conciliation Commission.' While the discussions were still in progress, 'no agreements had been reached with anyone...' and the 'discussions with the representatives of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia had been solely in relation to exploring the possibilities of an agreement.' On December 9, Yugoslav Foreign Minister Edvard Kardelj confirmed his country readiness to negotiate despite the 'artificially contrived alleged proofs' of Belgrade's assistance to the Greek guerrillas as stated in the in the UNGAR 193 (III), par A, 27 Nov. 1948. The telegram cited the terms of the Greek-Yugoslav draft agreement, but asserted that this question was tied to relations between Greece and Albania and Greece and Bulgaria. Kardelj considered as impossible the improvement of bilateral relations without considering the entire problem of the Balkans and did not settle the problem of the Greek-Albanian frontier. The position of Yugoslavia was especially remarkable despite the split ongoing between Belgrade and Tirana on the COMINFORM issue, giving the stance of the latter on it, which created one of the deepest fractures between socialist countries.

While the New York Times (on 15 December) blamed the failure to the extremist position on Greece, Evatt, on the day before, with a strong optimist approach, stated that the Conciliation Committee nevertheless had "made very considerable progress" and that "a draft agreement had been prepared after many points had been accepted by all parties." However, he said that "an outstanding question upon which agreement had not been reached was the formal request

¹²⁴ It should be noted the EAM, led and dominated by KKE, during this period, not only supported the Greek Government's claim to 'Northern Epirus', but claimed territorial rectifications along the Greek-Bulgarian frontier in Western Thrace and laid claims to Turkish territory in Eastern Thrace as well. The EAM-KKE claims were made in an 'official' communications to the Paris Peace Conference on 31 July 1946 and to the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Conference on 11 November 1946. Thus in order to increase a popular support from the Greek population.

¹²⁵ "Le Monde", Paris, 7 December 1948, p. 1; UN Press Release, 8 December 1948.

made that Greece should agree to treat the existing boundaries between Albania and Greece as definitive.”¹²⁶

As a matter of practice, Evatt remarked that the actual existing boundaries between the countries in the region were recognized as *de facto* ones and it was obvious that no party “could alter them contrary to the principles and purposes of the Charter.” In conclusion, the Chairman of the Commission expressed his gratitude to the representatives of all four countries for their cooperation, and stated his confidence that “the work we have begun and almost succeeded in completing, will be completed. The work of the Committee will go on formally at Lake Success when the Assembly meets for the resumption of its business and in the meantime, the good offices of the Secretary-General and myself will be available to all four parties.” Despite minimal results, the end of the General Assembly, saw some progress in the Greek issue, although the Albania refusal to sign any agreement unless Greece gave a formal renunciation of its longstanding claim to ‘Northern Epirus’, and the Bulgaria and Yugoslavia reject to sign unless the Albania did so.

In the interval between the first and second parts of the Third General Assembly there was a considerable controversy concerning the conciliation discussions which had taken place in Paris. On 15 December 1948, the Greek Government, confirming its contradictory stance *vis-a-vis* the UN, issued a public statement expressing regret at the discontinuance of the Conciliation Committee until April 1949, noting that Athens had shown its good will during the talks, and declaring that the obstacles to pacification had been raised by the northern neighbors. Special note was given to the problem of ‘Northern Epirus’, in which the attitude of Greece had been self-labeled as ‘entirely realistic’ and had facilitated the task of the Committee, although the ‘lawful claim’ of Greece over this territory had been maintained.

Less than two weeks later, the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, addressing the Parliament pointed out the full responsibility of US and UK on the situation, since the two countries had imposed a regime on the Greek people which the overwhelming majority of the people reject. This situation, Kardelj asserted, had created in Greece a condition of open warfare between the Greek government and its own people. Moreover, the substantial failure of the Conciliation Committee is a clear political responsibility of Greek government and its stubborn rejection of the declaration that existing frontiers be considered final. The Yugoslav, said Kardelj delegation had rejected the idea of signing a separate declaration, since the relations of Greece and her northern neighbors represent a whole which can only be solved as such.

Nevertheless the not positive scenario, on 5 January 1949, the Secretary-General Trygve Lie announced Evatt’s intention to resume the discussions in April, when the General Assembly reconvened. Few days later, the Chairman of the Conciliation Commission, interviewed by a Greek daily reiterated his hopes. Although there were outstanding differences over Northern Epirus, he felt that, once diplomatic representatives had been exchanged, this and other differences might well be settled through diplomatic channels. Well aware about the overlapping roles between the Conciliation Committee and UNSCOB, he thought the work of the two committees were largely complementary, and, according to him, provided the progress already made were indicative of a sincere desire by all parties to reach agreement, it

¹²⁶ The Greek delegation had stressed this position throughout the talks, emphasizing that it merely sought not to prejudice its claims, which were before the Council of Foreign Ministers [of the Peace Conference], and stating that it would seek solution only through pacific means.

Indeed, long since the Greek government had sought normalization of relations with its northern neighbors, had considered its frontier conventions with Yugoslavia (1927) and Bulgaria (1931) legally in force, had submitted a model frontier convention to UNSCOB already in February 1948 (A/574; A. AC. 16/114 and Annex B), and was quite willing to accept a proposition for neutral chairmen for the proposed mixed frontier commissions. However, this was eliminated from the proposed agreements, since the representatives of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia refused to consider the proposals

might reasonably be hoped that ultimate agreement could be achieved in April at Lake Success.

Bulgaria, after an initial openness adopted a much more rigid stance with a note issued at the end of January where blamed UNGA - as well as Yugoslavia done - of acting on the basis of false allegations when it renewed UNSCOB. Further, asserted that agreement could have been reached instead within the Conciliation Committee on basic questions insuring the means and procedure for settling the differences actually dividing the present Athens government and its three northern neighbors.

Further, the Bulgarian government declared that it had completely cooperated with the Committee, and had accepted all the proposals as explained and supplemented in agreements concerning, directly or indirectly, Bulgaria's sovereignty and independence. While the Bulgarian Government declared its readiness to reach a settlement and had authorized its envoy to sign the agreement, it accused Evatt at the meeting of December 1, of eliminating the reference to "the acceptance of present frontiers", just to please Greece.

In the view of Bulgaria, it was clear that Greece did not wish to eliminate its disagreements with its northern neighbors, and had other aims.

For Sofia, the mediation efforts of Evatt were strongly blamed as an alleged attempt to persuade Bulgaria and Albania to sign an agreement without a clause for the recognition of present frontiers, which was against logic and did not represent a basis for the improvement of relations and achievement of cooperation. The Chairman of the Conciliation Committee was also accused of trying to clear the Athens of any responsibility by declaring that the Greek Government could not make such a declaration because of the internal situation in Greece. In the end, of course, the Greek Government was held responsible for failure in the discussions.

As widely expected, the Greek Government responded the next day, accusing both Bulgaria but also the same Evatt. For Athens, Sofia had completely ignored the fact that, from their beginning, the Conciliation Committee's discussions had been placed within the framework of the decisions of the United Nations, connected with the aggression on Greece by her neighbors, and were certainly not to constitute anything else than a means to allay pressure exerted on her borders. In the Greek view, under no conditions were these talks to constitute a peace council for settlement of territorial or other relevant problems, and this was made plain from the very first moment. It was therefore out of place and time to try to settle the 'North Epirus' question during these talks.

The exclusion of one of the most disputed points from a hypothetical agenda worsened the situation and paradoxically the KKE, with the rejection of all compromise, token at the 5th Plenum of the Central Committee. In the document, the Greek communists promised that victory would be achieved in 1949, talked of detaching 'Aegean Macedonia' from Greece, and openly proclaimed that, without the assistance received from the Popular Democracies to the north, progress could not have been achieved.¹²⁷

The Greek Government, to the contrary, pursued an independent, but co-ordinated with US, policy of conciliation, with elements of ambiguity. While skeptical concerning possible direct negotiations with Yugoslavia, but was interested in exploiting the situation along constructive lines, at least in theory, either through the Conciliation Committee or through UNSCOB.

Athens had in mind, evidently, an agreement whereby the Greek-Yugoslav frontier would be the end of the guerrilla and may open a commercial agreement, like the re-opening of the railway lines with Yugoslavia, and resumption of traffic in the (would be) re-established Yugoslav Free Zone Area in Thessaloniki harbour.

¹²⁷ Cfr. A/935, 2nd Report of UNSCOB, 2 August 1949, Ch. III.

But it also felt that there might be “intercession” in Sofia and Tirana looking toward establishment of diplomatic relations and the solution of pertinent problems. If an initiative could be undertaken in these directions, it was felt that the discussions in April 1949 would be continued on firmer foundations for the conclusion of formal agreements among those concerned.

When the General Assembly reconvened at Lake Success in April 1949, Evatt reactivated the Conciliation Committee, despite the skepticism of some of its members, especially in the light that the military victory of Greece appeared now more consistent. He broadened the concept of the discussions somewhat in his announcement of April 14, which declared that the aim of the talks was “to explore the possibilities of future cooperation for the peaceful solution of all the differences between the four Balkan countries.

There was little evidence, however, that he was prepared to deal with the complicated problems involved. Meanwhile, UNSCOB, which had a clear and well-defined mandate for conciliation, as well as for observation, from the General Assembly in the resolution of 27 November 1948, found its own conciliatory role complicated, and was delayed in fulfilling its role out of deference to Evatt, although it was well-known that the President of the General Assembly had ignored and ridiculed that body on a number of occasions.

The Conciliation Committee held a preliminary meeting on 19 April¹²⁸ with Ambassador Sarper and Ambassador van Langenhove (Belgium), who replaced Spaak. The Belgian diplomat, introducing a new line, opposed the resumption of the discussions, in view of all the complicated issues, while Evatt insisted on his mandate and, ultimately, it was agreed that, in behalf of the Committee, with Ambassador Sarper always present. Evatt should see individual representatives of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia, with a view to finding out whether the situation had, indeed, changed since December 1948. The Committee met with Pipinelis on same day, little was said about conciliation, and Evatt did not reveal the contents of a cable which he had sent to the Greek Foreign Minister, Tsaldaris, on that day relative to certain executions said to have taken place in Greece, which did not helped to pave the way for a conciliation. A meeting was also held with the Albanian, Bulgarian and Yugoslav delegations, but, two days later, on 21 April, the Bulgarian and Yugoslav delegates suggested that the Chairman should first talk with the Albanian representative, in consideration of the substantial problems persisting between Athens and Tirana, and they repeated the positions. The Albanian representative, Mihal Prifti, in turn, indicated that the Albanian attitude will depend to a formal Greek renunciation of the claim to Northern Epirus, which remains the same. Evatt felt that Albania should not have taken that position, but that Greece should not hesitate to give a guarantee as to pacific procedure concerning the claim.

As the Conciliation Committee’s discussions took several days, there was much talk of the Greek problem, and much denunciation of the Greek Government, on the part of the Soviet bloc of representatives in the First Committee.

Moreover, on 20 April, Miltiades Porphyrogenis, the Minister of Justice in the Provisional Democratic Government of Greece, from Prague, made public a new stance of the insurgents, reflecting the increasing military pressure of which they were subjects from the Greek regular forces. The KKE asked a ceasefire, a general amnesty and new nationwide elections. There

¹²⁸ It was announced after the meeting that: arrangements had been made to continue the efforts at mediation especially in view of the substantial progress already made in the negotiations at Paris. Official information had been received that representatives of all four countries concerned would be available for participation in the talks. Cfr. Press Release SC/931.

In addition to Evatt and Trygve Lie, Ambassadors Fernand Van Langenhove, Perm. Rep. of Belgium and Selim Sarper, Perm. Rep. of Turkey served on the Committee.

was even a suggestion that Mr. Porphyrogenis would come to New York to assist in the conciliatory effort.

On 26 April 1949, Dean Rusk, Deputy Under-Secretary of State, Hector McNeil, British Perm. Rep. and Andrei Gromyko, Soviet Perm. Rep. met at the home of Secretary-General Trygve Lie. Dean Rusk expressed the hope that UK, US and USSR would use their influence to bring about a settlement of the Greek question. Gromyko thought that withdrawal of foreign troops would solve the problem, but was reminded that the American and British military assistance to Greece had become necessary because of conditions created in Greece by armed rebellion against the Greek Government by guerrillas, directly assisted by Greece's three northern neighbors. The first meeting, *a latere* to the official UN machinery did not provided evolution; another meeting arranged by Gromyko one week later made it clear the Moscow's stance which want to keep the Greek issue within the UN framework, even they knew that there were not in majority to change the line of the body for Greece.¹²⁹

In occasion of third meeting (at Flushing Meadows) Gromyko made clear the position of Moscow: 1) the Soviet Union would be willing to participate with the Great Powers in the supervision of a new Greek election; 2) the Soviet Union would be willing to join with the "Great Powers in a commission to "control" the northern frontier of Greece; and 3) all foreign military assistance, both material and personnel, would have to be withdrawn from Greece.

Aside to this multilateral activities, Evatt continued in its contacts, but continued to face that Greece lack of commitment about the frontier with Albania, and consequently block in any regional advance in the UN-led conciliation efforts.

Coinciding with the second meeting between the US, UK and USSR diplomats, Evatt made another attempt and proposed to Albania and Greece another plan:

1. *There being no state of war between the two countries, the two Governments agree to exchange diplomatic representatives as early as possible. Outstanding differences or disputes between the Governments may be taken up by them through regular diplomatic channels.*
2. *The two Governments will enter into immediate negotiations with a view to the drawing up of a frontier convention.*
3. *Each Government agrees to patrol its own frontiers up to the existing boundaries between the two states for the purpose of doing everything within its power to avoid frontier incidents and of preventing any breach of international law in the frontier zones.*
4. *In order to assist the two Governments in relation to frontier matters, there will be established a mixed Albanian-Greek frontier commission. Such commission will be constituted of one representative of each Government and will in the frontier zone be given access to the territories belonging to either State on its side of the border. In the first instance, the commission will be established for a period of one year. The commission will continue to function after the expiration of that period unless within one month before such expiration either Government notifies the other of its intention to terminate the commission.*
5. *The functions of the mixed frontier commission will be to act as a mediating authority in order to prevent border incidents and to settle disputes arising therefrom; to assist the Governments in handling expeditiously and wherever possible on the spot controversies arising under frontier conventions between them and generally to assist the Governments in assuring most friendly relations between the Greek and Albanian authorities on either side of the border.*

¹²⁹ Media reports of the meeting stated that Gromyko in the substance re-proposed the points submitted by Porphyrogenis, while Rusk stressed the necessity the end of the flow of arms and other equipment to the insurgents, now transiting only from Albania and Bulgaria, in majority.

On 9 May the Greek Perm. Rep. Ambassador Vassili Dendramis substantially accepted the new formula of the Conciliation Committee, although he had a few amendments to propose, particularly in paragraph 4 but¹³⁰ without any commitment.

However, there was no change in the positions of Albania, which continued to insist on a formal Greek renunciation of the claim to 'Northern Epirus' and the stalemate protracted.

Evatt, after other useless attempts to break the stalemate on 27 May 1949, it addressed communications to the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia, drawing their attention to its functions under the UNGARs of 21 October 1947 and 27 November 1948 and reminded them that its good offices continued to be available.¹³¹

When the General Assembly convened in September 1949, it seemed desirable to reconstitute the Conciliation Committee, a procedure which the US delegation now favored and, indeed, the addresses of Secretary of State Dean Acheson and UK Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, on 21 and 26 September, stressed a conciliatory note.¹³²

Those involved in the effort, moreover, were able to draw upon the experience, both of the previous Conciliation Committee and of UNSCOB, and this time careful records were kept of the essential documentation. A draft resolution was prepared by the US, but, in view of experiences of the past, it was deemed appropriate that the Australian delegation should initiate the resolution, which Ambassador Makin did before the First Committee on 28 September.

The new Conciliation Committee was to consist of the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the 1st Committee, to continue the work of the Conciliation Committee appointed at the 3rd Regular Session in an endeavour to reach a pacific settlement of existing differences between Greece on the one hand, and Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia on the other, to make any necessary recommendations thereto, and to consult in its discretion with other powers which might be able to assist.

It was obvious at once that the Australian proposal had almost universal support and no proposals were made as to amendments, although the states of Soviet bloc sought to delay the vote, and inferred once more that the primary concern of the new Committee should be the internal situation in Greece, including the matter of alleged executions and death sentences.

Panagiotis Pipinelis, of the Greek Delegation, indicated that his Government was ready to cooperate with the new Conciliation Committee, and the resolution was unanimously approved on 29 September.¹³³

In its own approach to the conciliation, the US sought to avoid any appearance of intransigence, to explore any genuine Soviet disposition to settle the Greek problem on acceptable terms, and seize the initiative from the USSR in any conciliatory effort, but to confine the discussions to the problem of threats to the political independence and territorial integrity of Greece, and avoid any irrelevant discussions looking toward foreign intervention in Greek internal affairs. This procedure, of course, was in line with the letter and spirit of the UNGARs resolutions in 1947 and 1948. The Greek Delegation was to be kept informed of all developments and was carefully avoided any form of embarrassment of Yugoslavia, now isolated from the Soviet block. It was also desired to avoid a repetition of Soviet bloc propaganda debates on the Greek question, and, at the same time, if possible, the Soviet bloc was to be prevented from utilizing the consultations for purely propaganda purposes.

¹³⁰ Athens indicated that the frontier commission "in the frontier zone" would "be given access to its territory by either State on its side of the border."

¹³¹ Cfr. A/935, paras. 26-35.

¹³² Cfr. A/PV 222, 229.

¹³³ Cfr. A/CI/SR. 274-276.

Again the Conciliation Committee fall in a wishful thinking (at least for Evatt even if was no more part of it) quagmire, between 4 to 22 October 1949 the Committee¹³⁴ held more than 20 meetings.¹³⁵ It was agreed that the working format should remain informal, but keeping the record of the meeting, in contrast of the Evatt format. Immediately emerged that the position of the parties were the same, with the remarkable difference that Yugoslavia was more open to the Conciliation Committee, in order to mark the difference with the Soviet block, but without formal break, at least within the UN framework. Further, the end of the military operations in Greece made Athens much less interested and willing to renounce to the historical claims to Albania (and in lesser extent to Bulgaria), and consequently less committal to the initiatives of the Committee.

This time the USSR Perm. Rep. David Malik formalized the proposals of may formulated by Gromyko in the month of May¹³⁶ (16) and declared that Moscow was open to consider the Evatt draft proposal.

The Committee drafted a new proposal which included the territorial integrity of the concerned states, the renunciation of the use of force to change the borders.

The compromise of a very minimal level, proposed only that Greece and Albania should undertake not resort to force over territorial differences, but Albania insisted that this meant that the frontier remain disputed and that Greece would still to acquire 'Northern Epirus'.

But the key point was the proposal to establish of a mixed Frontier Commission, tasked to assist in relation to frontier matters. This Commission would be charged, if operational, of the mediation activities on the ground.

While US and UK received positively the proposal, the Greek government, in consideration of the military situation, adopted a retard tactic, objecting on terminology and minor details.

The Soviet delegate Andrey Vyshinsky strongly supported the Albanian position in declaring Moscow' position on the final status of the present boundary was "irrevocable".

Yugoslavia, in principle accepted the proposals, but in the substance adapted to the Albanian and Bulgarian stances. Sofia repeated the Soviet position. The renewed stalemate, despite many hopes and diplomatic games, led the President of the General Assembly to consider it a useless exercise and led to the real end of the Committee.¹³⁷

When, on 4 November 1949, two weeks after the end of the war, the General Assembly renewed the mandate of UNSCOB by the 1st Committee, some Member States, namely Mexico, Peru and Australia (of course) expressed hope that the work of Conciliation Committee would continue.¹³⁸ On 18 November, the General Assembly in plenary session approved the continuation of UNSCOB¹³⁹ including the conciliatory role confirmed and the Special Committee was instructed to:

'...continue to assist the Four Governments concerned in the implementation of the Assembly's resolutions, in particular to promote the restoration of normal relations between Greece and her northern neighbours and the maintenance of international peace and security in the Balkans...'¹⁴⁰

¹³⁴ Formed by the Philippine Major-General Carlos Peña Romulo, President of the General Assembly Trygve Lie, UN Secretary-General, Lester Pearson, Canadian Foreign Minister and Chairman of the 1st Committee of the Assembly, Ambassador Selim Sarper, Perm. Rep. of Turkey, Vice Chairman.

¹³⁵ Cfr. A/CI/506 report of the Conciliation Committee, reprinted in HOWARD, N. H., *The Greek Question in the Fourth General Assembly of the United Nations*, Washington DC, Department of State Publication 3785, 1950, pp. 24-27.

¹³⁶ Cfr. A/CI/506, Annex 1 and 2.

¹³⁷ Cfr. A/CI/506, Annex 7.

¹³⁸ Cfr. A/CI/SR311.

¹³⁹ 50 votes in favor, 6 against, 2 abstentions.

¹⁴⁰ Cfr. UNGAR 228 (IV).

There was no further developments in the Greek problem, under this perspective, until the final session of the General Assembly on 10 December 1949, when the President Romulo stated that, in the light of the further conversations of the Conciliation Committee with representatives of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia he stated that the prospect of peace encouraging and was confident of progress "if all parties abide in good faith by the resolutions of the General Assembly and the provisions of the Charter."¹⁴¹ The President of the Assembly also considered the fact that there had been no executions in Greece since the enactment of the leniency legislation on 30 September was a positive sign indicating that "attitude of humanitarianism and tolerance, compatible with security and public order" could not "but help to facilitate the work of conciliation which must eventually take place among the States involved in this problem".

On 19 December 1949, the US Secretary of State Dean Acheson during a press conference, referring to the Greek civil war stated that the conflict was substantially over, that remained no more than 2.000 communist insurgent in the Greek soil, dispersed in minuscule groups, while more than 8.000 were recorded in Albania soil, ready to be moved in Bulgaria and Romania and ready to be used against Yugoslavia. With this emerged clearly which was now the situation.¹⁴²

The 1950, with the consolidation of the military situation and the progressive normalization in Greece there were other signs of the willing of Athens to appease the ties with its neighbours. On 20 January the Greek government repeated its willingness to (1) make further efforts to resolve its differences with Yugoslavia; (2) re-establish normal diplomatic and good neighbourly relations with Albania and Bulgaria; and (3) renew previously operative frontier conventions or conclude new ones. The Major-General Romulo, at the end of the Assembly expressed public optimism on this issue, but there were no concrete results and a considerable skepticism prevailed, also in consideration that the ICRC encountered serious difficulties in carrying out its tasks in connection with the Greek children taken into Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. The ICRC appealed to the UN Secretary-General, who was much concerned over the absence of developments. Indeed the relations of Athens and Belgrade saw a major positive shift, when on 28 February 1953, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey (the last two members of NATO since 1952) signed a political pact. The relations with Bulgaria improved as well and will be re-established on 19 May 1954, while with Albania the normalization of the diplomatic relations happened only in 1971.

In conclusion, the Conciliation Committee since its activation found themselves unable to develop a basis for conciliation between Greece and its northern neighbors, although they had narrowed points of differences in some cases, and the Committee was always ready to resume its consultations. The Soviet Union required Greece to renounce her claims over 'Northern Epirus', in view of the fact that Albania had asked for a clause whereby both Tirana and Athens would recognize the existing border as final, whereas Greece felt that she would prejudice this question.

The lack of effectiveness of the Conciliation Committee could be found also in the silent rivalry with UNSCOB, to which the Member States did not agree to withdraw the conciliatory function, even very rarely implemented, from the mandate of the Special Committee. The main reason of it could find in a complex of reasons. Firstly the US saw the Evatt's initiative as unfriendly and set up without any coordination; secondly Greece, for both internal and external reasons, appeared very hostile to conciliate with states which Athens politic-military leadership considered as aggressors; further domestically issues based on an

¹⁴¹ Cfr. A/PV276.

¹⁴² Cfr. PEARSON, O., *Albania in the Twentieth Century, A History*: Volume III: *Albania as Dictatorship and Democracy, 1945-99*, Tauris, I.B. 2006, pp 378-379; HOWARD, H. N., Greece and its Balkan neighbours (1948-1949): the United Nations attempts a conciliation, in "Balkan Studies", 7, 1966, pp. 11-2.

strong nationalism and expansionism, very popular across all the groups of the Greek popular opinion, led Athens to very reluctant to agree to the pre-judicial issues of renunciation of their historical claims versus the northern neighbor. This strong position, and the concern to not to irritate a country which already suffered the Axis invasion and occupation, and now a communist aggression, also weakened the support of many states to the Conciliation Committee.

Chapter 9

The legal basis of UNSCOB

The legal basis of a peace stabilization mission (using a current time term) is very important. The legality provide the legitimacy and the intrinsic value of the operation. UNSCOB legal framework was very important and innovative, as well as disputed. In the resolution under which UNSCOB was established, the General Assembly of the United Nations states that it has:

*Considered the record of the Security Council proceedings in connexion with the complaint of the Greek Government of 3 December 1946, including the report submitted by the Commission of Investigation established by the Security Council resolution of 19 December 1946 and information supplied by the Subsidiary Group of the Commission of Investigation subsequent to the report of the Commission.*¹⁴³

The UNSC its, it should be recalled, decided that the Greek question should be removed from its own agenda and that the records be placed at the disposal of the UNGA.¹⁴⁴

This aspect is specifically envisaged in Article 11¹⁴⁵ of the UN Charter, which provides that: *The General Assembly may discuss any questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security brought before it by any member of the United Nations, or by the Security Council...*

No reference is made, of course, to any specific Charter article(s) in the resolution establishing UNSCOB; nor is the situation there classified as a threat to international peace.¹⁴⁶

Besides the authority granted to it in Article 11¹⁴⁷ of the Charter, the Assembly also has power under article 10 and 14. Article 10 permits the Assembly to make recommendations on any matter within the scope of the Charter, subject to the need, under Article 11 to refer 'any such question on which action is necessary'¹⁴⁸ to UNSC, 'Action' is not there to be taken to mean the establishment of a subsidiary body - where that interpretation given, it would render meaningless the right of the Assembly, under Article 22, to 'establish such subsidiary organs as it deems necessary to the performance of its functions'.

Article 14 permits the Assembly to 'recommend measures for the peaceful adjustment of any situation... which it deems likely to impair the general welfare or friendly relations among nations...'

UNSCOB, then was a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, which was operating within the authority as defined in Articles 10, 11¹⁴⁹ and 14.

However the existence of the Committee was contested by Byelorussia SSR, USSR, Ukraine SSR, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia and by Bulgaria and Albania (the last two, at the moment of the establishment of UNSCOB, were not yet Member States of the Organization), which considered it illegal.

¹⁴³ Cfr. UNGAR 109 (II), 21 Oct. 1947, para 2.

¹⁴⁴ Cfr. C/555.

¹⁴⁵ Cfr. C/555.

¹⁴⁶ Even if following resolutions made it clear this pronouncement like UNGAR 288 (IV), 18 Nov. 1949 and 382 (V), 01 Dec. 1950, part B.

¹⁴⁷ Cfr. C/555.

¹⁴⁸ Cfr. C/555.

¹⁴⁹ Cfr. C/555.

The point of conflict was not that the Assembly was entitled or less to establish a subsidiary body, but that this act was an infringement of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia sovereignty. This position, however existed also when the issue of Greece was under the jurisdiction of the UNSC and they contested the right of this body to set up, under the terms of the Chapter VI of the Charter, of the Commission of Investigation, set up against the will of the parties. Any proposal to do so would be a 'decision' under Chapter VII, and could not be a recommendation under Chapter VII. In a statement before the Council, the Bulgarian representative stated that:

'The proposed commission would put the states concerned under a kind of trusteeship. It would not only ascertain facts, but would resolve disputes, would have the right to demand reports from the four governments, to cross frontiers without permission, to have direct access to governments and to maintain observers along the frontier'¹⁵⁰

No one of this points and/or rights was claimed by the Commission, this declaration was part of the 'normal' political debate in contentious times like there was those.

As well as the Special Committee was not entitled, while the group of states against UNSCOB confuse the legal consequences from the establishment *per se* of the Committee. The General Assembly made it clear that the Committee could not operate on the territory of any state without the explicit consent of the same state. However, its establishment was something else and it was clearly enough within the terms of Articles 10, 11, 14 and 22 of the Charter.¹⁵¹

UNGAR 109 (II), which established UNSCOB, gave it formal authorization in paragraph 9¹⁵² thereof, to determine its own procedure and [to] establish such sub-committees as it deems necessary. The observation groups formed by UNSCOB were thus authorized by this provision.¹⁵³

UNGAR 193 (III) later gave confirmation of this legal authority.

The legal framework of UNSCOB changed in 1951, when the situation in Greece was much more stable than the one of the establishment of the Committee. Greece proposed a draft resolution¹⁵⁴ expressing appreciation for the services of UNSCOB and its observers, and discontinuing the Committee within sixty (60) days after the adoption of the resolution. The debate that preceded adoption included specific proposals.

Two amendments were submitted to that draft resolution.

One, proposed by USSR, would delete the paragraph expressing approval of UNSCOB's report, appreciation of its service and gratitude to its observers. It would also delete the limit of the 60 days on the dissolution of the Special Committee.¹⁵⁵

In addition, Chile proposed: cessation of aid to Greek guerrillas; renewal of diplomatic and good-neighbourly relations; disarming and disposition of guerrillas; prohibition of supply of arms to Albania and Bulgaria; and cooperation of the States concerned with the appropriate UN body.¹⁵⁶

There were also two draft resolutions, one jointly proposed by Greece, US, UK, France and Mexico¹⁵⁷ which stated:

Considering that the situation in the Balkans might require prompt establishment of observation as contemplated in section B of resolution 337A (V),¹⁵⁸ it would request the

¹⁵⁰ Cfr. *Yearbook of the UN 1947*, p. 341.

¹⁵¹ Cfr. HIGGINS, R., *United Nations peacekeeping, documents and commentary, Vol. I The Middle East 1946-1957*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1969, p.263.

¹⁵² Cfr. *Yearbook of the UN 1947*, p. 341.

¹⁵³ Cfr. A/574, GAOR, 3rd sess., suppl.8, para.11.

¹⁵⁴ Cfr. A/AC 53/L.2.

¹⁵⁵ Cfr. A/AC53/L.5.

¹⁵⁶ Cfr. A/AC53/L.7.

¹⁵⁷ Cfr. A/A53/L.3.

Peace Observation Commission to establish a sub-commission on the Balkans, to be composed of from three to five members, with its seat at the United Nations Headquarters and with authority to dispatch observers to any area of international tension in the Balkans on the request of any State or States concerned, but only to the territory of the States consenting thereto. The sub-commission would have authority, if necessary, to visit the areas in which observations was undertaken. It would submit reports to the Peace Observation Commission and to the Secretary-General for the information to the Member States.

Also USSR proposed, aside the above-mentioned amendment, a draft resolution which recommended, with the object of restoring to normal the situation in Greece:

- (i) cessation of interference by the United States in Greece;
- (ii) declaration by Greece of a general amnesty, abolition of concentrations camps for Greek democrats and annulment of all death sentences passed by Greek courts on Greek democrats;
- (iii) establishment of diplomatic relations between Greece and Albania and Greece and Bulgaria; and
- (iv) dissolution of the Special Committee.¹⁵⁹

The Greek delegate answered that the perseverance and devotions to its mandate, the Special Committee achieved in setting out the aggressor in Greece and in hindering their intrigues and subversion. Albeit, as UNSCOB had reported, the danger to Greece is still ongoing, and that the Greek people had developed the strength to resist, and it was unlikely that there could be any resurgence of the subversion, he urge the dissolution of the Special Committee and the adoption of the one which establish the Balkans sub-Commission of the Peace Observation Commission.

Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, The Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Lebanon, Liberia, the Netherlands, new Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, UK and US expressed support to this position.

These representatives held in particular that the Special Committee, by stationing its observers, by furnishing the United Nations, with carefully sifted evidence of the threat to Greece and by calling the attention international public opinion to the situation on the northern borders of the country, had rendered invaluable services to the United Nations and on the cause for the Greek independence.

They expressed gratification that Greece, which had once feared for its independence, now felt finally strong enough to ask for the end of the Special Committee. The discontinuity of UNSCOB, it was stated, was sought because the Special Committee performed so well the tasks assigned to it.

I was said that the Greek problem, should now come back in the normality of the framework of the system of the international security system set up by the United Nations and it was therefore appropriate that the services of the peace Observation Commission should be utilized. The terms of reference of that Commission, it was considered, would restrict the action of proposed sub-commission on the Balkans in such manner as to rule out objections on the grounds of interference in the internal affairs of States.

However, two Members States, the Netherlands and the Philippines questioned whether the proposed sub-commission would be entitled to send observers to any part of the Balkans

¹⁵⁸ By this resolution, entitled 'Uniting for Peace', the Assembly established a Peace Observation Commission to observe and report on situation in any area where there exist international tension the continuance of which is likely to endanger international peace and security.

¹⁵⁹ Cfr. A/AC53/L.6.

where serious tension might arise without having to refer to the Peace Observation Commission. The representative of the United States, supported by the Greek representative, replied that he interpreted the joint draft resolution as authorizing the sub-commission to act immediately at the request of the countries concerned.

The representatives of Byelorussian SSR, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Ukrainian SSR and USSR shared the position considering that, since the beginning, the inclusion of the Greek issue in the agenda of the General Assembly was unjustified and that the present debate hampered the resumption of normal relations between Greece and its northern neighbours. The Special Committee was illegally established and all its activities, as consequence, are to be considered illegals. The final report of UNSCOB did not provide a real picture of the situation in Greece. The conclusions of the Special Committee were based not on real facts, but on tendentious evidences obtained from Greek military and other doubtful sources. More those evidence were tainted with tortures and threats to death sentences.

This group of states stated that the real problem in Greece has been the terroristic policy of its government and its aggressive claims against Albania and Bulgaria. Therefore, they supported the dissolution of UNSCOB, not on the ground of the reasons put forward by Greek draft resolution, but on the grounds that it had been harmful to the interests of the Greek people and had been responsible for the worsening of relations between Greece and its northern neighbours.

The same states also on regards of the joint proposal to establish a new sub-commission of the Peace Observation Commission, they maintained that the only purpose to be served by the new body would to be take over the Special Committee's functions. The proposed sub-commission was designed to do nothing but to act as an intelligence organ of UK and US in the Balkans. The solution of the problem, they considered, lay not in the creation of the sub-commission but in the cessation of foreign interference and the withdrawal from Greece of foreign economic and military missions through which attempts were being made to convert Greece into a base for aggression against USSR and the people's democracies.

UNGAR 508 (VI) A and B read respectively:

The General Assembly,

Having considered the report of the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans,

1. *Approves* the said report;
2. *Expresses* its deep appreciation of the invaluable services rendered for the preservation of peace and security in the Balkans by the members of the Special Committee;
3. *Expresses* its warm gratitude for the gallantry with which the observers of the Special Committee have carried out their difficult and dangerous task;
4. *Decides* to discontinue the Special Committee within sixty days after the adoption of the present resolution.

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 377 A (V) ('Uniting for peace'), section B, establishing a peace Observation Commission which could observe and report on the situation in any area where there exists international tension, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security,

Considering that the situation in the Balkans may require prompt establishment of observations as contemplated in resolution 377A (V), section B,

Resolves to request the Peace Observation Commission to establish a Balkan sub-commission composed of not less than three and nor more than five members, which its seat at the United Nations Headquarters, with authority:

- (a) To dispatch such observers as it may deem necessary to any area of international tension in the Balkans on the request of any State or States concerned, but only to the territory of States consenting thereto;
- (b) To visit, if it deem necessary, any area in which observation requested under subparagraph (a) is being conducted;
- (c) To consider such data as may be submitted to it by its member or observers and to make such reports as it deems necessary to the Peace Observation Commission and to the Secretary-General for the information of member States.¹⁶⁰

¹⁶⁰ Cfr. *Yearbook of the United Nations 1951*, pp. 328-30, extracts.

Chapter 10

UNSCOB activities of political control

According to the terms of UNGAR 109 (II), the Special Committee was required to report to the (UN) General Assembly.¹⁶¹ UNSCOB should submit interim reports to the Secretary-General for transmission to the members of the Organization.

UNGA itself nominated the countries to be represented within UNSCOB, and the government of those states nominated individual experts from among their nationals.

However, the Secretary-General was the person responsible for assigning to the Special Committee staff adequate to enable it to perform its duties.¹⁶²

As already mentioned, the observations groups were set up their headquarters in Salonika and they were supported by a central element of the Committee, formed by 3 administrative officers, 4 radio operators, 1 precis writer, 3 drivers, 1 auto mechanic, 1 radio repairman.¹⁶³

The Administrative Group, as it was named, was in addition to the Seventh (or Reserve) Group.

The observation groups, administered from Salonika, were responsible to the Special Committee, which have its main HQ in Athens and was responsible to the general Assembly, on whose behalf the Secretary-General was circulating documents and making the necessary administrative decision, in line with his role of the highest administrative authority of the organization. UNSCOB also availed itself of its right to make recommendations to the General Assembly in its reports.

The existence of UNSCOB depended upon the General Assembly decisions and votes and not by the Secretary-General. When the Special Committee was discontinued, with the Balkan Sub-Commission of the Peace Observation Commission taking its place, the observation function continued.

According to UNGAR 508 (VI) B, the Sub-Commission was to consider data presented by its members or by its observers, and to make any necessary reports to the Peace Observation Commission, another body established by the General Assembly and to which the Sub-Commission answer (and again not to the Secretary-General).¹⁶⁴

Again in 1953, the Balkan Sub-Commission merely took note of the various reports from the observers and did not find it necessary to report to the Peace Observation Commission.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ Cfr. paragraph 9 (3) of the mentioned UNGAR.

¹⁶² Cfr. paragraph 10 of UNGAR 109 (II).

¹⁶³ Cfr. A/521, 9. Jan. 1948, 1st Interim Report of UNSCOB, Annex 10.

¹⁶⁴ The Balkan Sub-Commission took note of the various reports from the observers, but did not find it necessary to report to the Peace Observation Commission during 1952. On 12 December 1952, the Peace Observation Commission decided to continue the Sub-Commission with the same authority and membership. Cfr. A/CN. 7/8, *Yearbook of the United Nations 1952*, p. 291.

¹⁶⁵ *Yearbook of the United Nations 1953*, pp.248-9.

Chapter 11

UNSCOB work of administrative and military control

UNSCOB used widely military advisers, provided by the Member States of the Special Committee in the early stages of its activity in order to offer advice in the initial phase of the operation, especially on the evidences concerning alleged frontier infiltrations from Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to Greece.

I. Instructions Received by Military Advisers

The Military Advisers received specifically instructions to gain a general impression of conditions in the zone of operations between Ioannina and Konitsa and to report that impression and give their opinion as to whether or not the guerrillas were receiving aid from foreign sources. The Military Advisers were not required to carry out detailed investigations or produce the testimony of witnesses.

II. Outline of work done

1. The possible foreign aid to the guerrilla was considered under two main categories:

Operational planning and control, which would include moves through Albania; and *Administrative or logistical aid*, which includes the supply of ammunition, clothing and equipment and the evacuation of wounded;

2. The Military Advisers, in the time available, were unable to form any definite Conclusions regarding operational support, but are certain that logistical support in being given...¹⁶⁶

13. The Special Committee drew up a 'Table of Organization and Equipment for Observation Groups', based upon a plan providing for the establishment of six observation groups on the field and one in reserve, each composed of four observers and auxiliary personnel. The implementation of this plan had later to be modified in accordance with the financial resources and availability of personnel and equipment.

14. Before the groups were organized, a group of military experts from the delegations was sent to the Delvinakion region in Epirus on 9 December 1947 as part of a reconnaissance of the Greek frontier to prepare the establishment of the observation groups. From 29 December 1947 to 2 January 1948, military experts visited the Ioannina-Konitsa area during the battle of Konitsa. The dispatch of Observation Group 1 to the Epirus area was directed by the Special Committee on 5 January 1948. Six zones were defined, and by the end of February the Groups 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 were in their [respective] zones. The Committee had been unable to establish the Group 5 and the reserve group by the end of May 1948, owing to insufficient personnel. Members of the Special Committee have themselves time to time visited the frontier and the groups in the field in order to obtain first hand information on conditions on the spot.¹⁶⁷

The instructions to the observation groups were issued by the Special Committee, subject only to the right of ultimate review of the General Assembly. The initial instructions given to the observation groups included detailed advice on the recording of identity of witnesses, dates and times, terrain and evidences as stated by the 1st Interim Report of the Committee, which paved the way for the work of the observers also for future operations of the UN: 'The observers should also not be content to wait until an incident is brought to their notice before taking action. Before proceeding to the scene of an incident, they should be thoroughly acquainted with the terrain and the border line in their sector, and should know the local

¹⁶⁶ Cfr. A/522, 2nd Interim Report of UNSCOB, Annex A, 19 Jan. 1948.

¹⁶⁷ The reported document shows that the establishment of the Committee activities on the ground was not easier and that were carried out on spot operations. Cfr. A/574, 1st Report of UNSCOB, 30 June 1948.

inhabitants as well as possible so as to be able to follow the situation. This work of preliminary and personal investigation, conducted with discretion, will also be the best method of relieving observers from excessive dependence on interpreters. It would also be useful if they were to write periodical reports to keep UNSCOB constantly informed and to enable it to give information and directions to the other observation groups.

When they take evidence, they should make every effort to see that it is as up to date as possible. It should preferably be taken on the spot and from its first-hand witnesses chosen by the observers, rather than allowing the local authorities to submit witnesses.

Finally, the observers should not limit themselves to investigating infringements of international law and good neighbourliness, which is the aspect of their mission; they should observe above all any indication or possibility of improvement of the situation in their zone, in accordance with the paragraph 2 of Article 6 of the General Assembly decision of 21 October 1947, setting out UNSCOB's tasks.¹⁶⁸

UNSCOB, despite not officially included in the peacekeeping missions list of the UN, in its short life established a very detailed instructions to observers in the carrying out their duties. In the other UN observation missions, either the factor of the pressure of time has prevented the formulation of such precise instruction or else they have not been published remaining confidential.

7. The Special Committee undertook a complete compilation and revision of the instructions issued to its observers. Experience gained in 1948 had demonstrated the need to clarify and define the scope of United Nations observation work so that this new form of international machinery could function in the most impartial and objective manner possible.

The result was a 'Handbook for Observers' which includes broad general instructions, a standard form for observation group reports, as well as a specific explanation of how the groups are to be organized and administered.

8. The key instruction contained in the 'Handbook for Observers', is the following:

Members of observation groups will be guided by the fact that they are working for the highest international body, the United Nations. They should conduct their work with complete impartiality and utmost discretion.

Observers will, therefore, exercise in all loyalty, discretion and conscience the functions entrusted to them and discharge those functions and regulate their conduct with the interest of the United Nations in view and accept instructions in regard to the performance of their duties only from the Special Committee.

9. The duty of observation is defined in the 'Handbook for Observers' as follows:

'The observation groups will observe and ascertain to what extent and neighbourly relations exist between Greece on the one hand and Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia on the other. No opportunity should be lost to gather information or to submit any suggestions, which might lead the Special Committee to make recommendations for the improvement of such relations

(a) The observation groups shall observe and report whether any assistance or support, and in what form, is being rendered from outside Greece to armed group fighting against the Greek Government, including the use of non-Greek territory as a base for the preparation or launching of armed action and, to this end, shall:

- (i) Investigate incidents as instructed by the Special Committee,
- (ii) Examine at their discretion incidents brought to their attention on behalf of any of the four Governments concerned or by their own observation or information,

¹⁶⁸ Cfr. A/521 1st Interim Report of UNSCOB, Annex 15, part. 1, pp. 47-8.

(iii) Interrogate witnesses selected at their own discretion or brought to their attention by liaison officers of any of the four Governments concerned,

(b) The observation groups shall also observe and report:

(i) On compliance with frontier convention for the regulation and control of common frontiers and the pacific settlement of frontier incidents and disputes and with such customary frontier practice as may exist along the northern frontiers of Greece, and also

(ii) On such other special problems as may be directed from the time to time by the Special Committee.

10. In view of the difficulty of obtaining direct observation of frontier incidents by reason of limited personnel, the mountainous nature of the terrain and most important of all, the fact that United Nations observers were not able to conduct their work on both sides of the northern frontiers of Greece, special attention was paid to establishing a standardized procedure for interrogating witnesses.

The 'Handbook for Observers' requires witnesses to be informed prior to interrogation that they are not before a court of law but before representatives of UNSCOB, that they are not obliged to answer any question or to reveal any information which they do not desire to divulge, and to be assured that their names will be kept secret in order to safeguard their personal security.

11. In carrying out their work of observation for the Special Committee, the observers have capably and loyally served the United Nations, frequently under difficult and dangerous situations.¹⁶⁹

Further, the 'Standard Form for Observation Group Reports' established the keystone doctrine for interrogation of witnesses, that was widely used in other UN field operations.

The modus operandi of the observers is carefully detailed, and the delicate management of the witnesses and their protection from possible retaliation for their cooperation with UNSCOB is, as of today, still an example of careful confidentiality of them.

The document (Chapter II, Section B) stated:

1. The interrogation of witnesses is one method of ascertaining to what extent the four countries concerned are heeding the General Assembly resolutions. Observation groups may interrogate any person they deem it advisable to question. They are encouraged to select witnesses at random without the aid of liaison services. Witness testimony may be used not only in the examination of specific incidents but also to obtain general background material.
2. Witness hearing will be conducted in open meeting except that observation groups may, at their discretion, hold closed meetings to record testimony, the immediate publication of which might hinder the Special Committee's task of conciliation and, in cases where such procedure is deemed necessary, to promote the personal safety of witnesses. Testimony taken in a closed meeting will be placed in a separate annex, together with an explanation of the reasons for the group's action and any opinions concerning the testimony. Observation groups are informed that such testimony will become public when the next report of the Special Committee is submitted to the General Assembly.
3. All witnesses will be informed prior to their interrogation that they are not before a court of law but before representatives of the United Nations Special Committee on

¹⁶⁹ Two members of UNSCOB, an observer Lt. Col. W. H. Good, from UK, and an USAF pilot, the Fl. Lt. W. O. Wagner, died in air crash while on duty on 17 February 1949 landing in Florina, a French observer, G. Maury was seriously injured by a road mine explosion; for the French observer was not possible to disclose if he was a military or civilian.

the Balkans. They will be told that they are not obliged to answer any questions or to reveal any information which they do not desire to divulge. Witnesses will not be sworn. They will be assured that their names will be kept secret.

4. Names will be kept secret in order to safeguard the personal security of witnesses. Accordingly, their names and other personal data will be obtained and recorded in private. An open meeting will temporarily be closed for this purpose. The name of each witness will be replaced by a symbol beginning with the number of the group, followed the letter 'W' and the serial number of the witness for the group (e.g. 5/W/122). Each report will include a secret annex identifying the witness by giving the witness by giving the witness symbol numbers, the corresponding names of witnesses, their birth places, age and present residence. The group will retain copies in its filed safe until mimeographed copies are received, at which time the group copy, including the secret annex, will be destroyed by burning. The Secretariat of UNSCOB will be responsible for safekeeping of the forwarded copy.
5. Only observers may put questions to witnesses. During a public hearing, observers may hold off-the-record consultations before putting certain questions to witnesses.
6. For the rights and duties of liaison officers at interrogations, see Chapter III, annex O.
7. For the privilege of the Press at interrogations, see part I, paragraph 9.
8. (a) The Scheme for Analysis of Witness Statements in the 'Standard Form for Observation Group Reports' will be used as a guide in interrogating witnesses. It indicates what general types of information are of interest to the Special Committee, aside from data connected with a specific incident. The observers will make every effort to obtain precise and circumstantial details. Interrogations should answer clearly the questions who, what, how, when, where (relate replies to specific map co-ordinates), why, number and quantity. Should such precision are unattainable, the report should indicate (example: 'location unknown'). Direct evidence should be distinguished from hearsay. If practical, a marked map or sketch will accompany the statement of a witness. To facilitate understanding of references to obscure locations, mention of the nearest well-known or recognizable feature (mountain, big town, bridge, etc.) should be made in suitable cases.
(b) Dates should be given exactly and in full (day, month, year). Time should be recorded on the twenty-four clock system. Observers should not however, state the date more exactly than the witness. When the witness' memory is blurred, calculate as closely as possible and use expressions such as 'on about...' or 'between ... and ...'. Such expressions as 'about three months later', 'on the following day' or 'five days before' which may be useful in stressing a period of time, should be pinned down by an actual date, if obtainable. Place names should be accompanied by map co-ordinates and also the country, whenever the names will be unfamiliar to an average reader.
9. Witness testimony will normally be recorded in summary record form and attached as an annex. Observation groups will omit irrelevant information produced during as interrogation. Observation groups will, however, record verbatim portion of interrogations they deem be to be of great importance. The record will begin with the witness symbol number, appropriate age, normal occupation (soldier, artisan, farmer, civil servant, professional) and present status, e.g. guerrilla, Greek Army soldier, refugee, including date of recruitment, surrender or capture, etc., together with date and place of interrogation. It will also state whether or not witness is a prisoner and, if so, what legal status he holds, i.e. civil or military prisoner, awaiting trial or condemned and, if so, to what penalty. The record should specify clearly the circumstances under which the witness as presented to the observation group, i.e.

presented by a liaison officer, selected at by the group in the field, etc.. Also include a brief estimate of the intelligence and credibility of the witness.

10. As general rule, witness testimony concerning events prior to 27 November 1948 should be eliminated from all observation group reports, it being understood that novel or especially significant testimony concerning events prior to that date should be excepted from this file, and continue to be recorded as in in the past.

The civil war situation, together with the protection of witnesses, raised the role of the liaison officers. In reality, those, due to the lack of cooperation of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, were only from the Greek side. UNSCOB established a set of rules, which avoided, despite the strong criticism of the pro-insurgent side, any kind of manipulation, very high during a civil war with a strong ideological polarization. The duties were included in the instructions of the Chairman of the Committee since the beginning of the operation and modified, developed and better articulated accordingly the ongoing activities of UNSCOB.

The rules for Liaison Officers focusing to keep the impartiality and independence of the Committee's works.

The duties of the Liaison Officer the Chairman of UNSCOB are to facilitate inquiries by the observer group and present witnesses and other evidence.

He may present for consideration of the group incidents, witnesses and other evidence.

Except on special instructions from the group, he will not be requested to withdraw from interrogations.

He will not participate directly in any questioning, but may propose questions to the Chairman [of the group]. The latter shall ask those question only if the group deems them useful. He will not take notes or record witness testimony.

He will not be employed as interpreter in the investigation of incidents or interrogatory of witnesses.¹⁷⁰

As above-mentioned, the 'Standard Form for Observation Group Reports', together with the 'Handbook for Observers' and the following 'Observation Service Manual' created a *corpus legis* which established a clear *modus operandi* and *pensandi* framework which entered in very minimal details of the work of the observers:

(...)

4. Observers are on tour of duty in the frontier areas for periods of one month, but reports are submitted every fourteen days from each base.

5. At the meeting held on 10 February 1950, the Special Committee decided that a revision of the 1949 'Handbook for Observers' was desirable.

6. Section 1 of 1950 'Observation Service Manual' contains the following broad general instructions under the heading: 'Task of the Observation Service':

1. Pursuant to the terms of reference of the Special Committee as laid down in the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly of 21 October 1947, 27 November 1948, 18 November 1949 the task of UNSCOB observation service is to report to the Special Committee immediately and continuously on the situation in the regions assigned to it, in order to provide the Committee with information which, added to what the Committee may dispose fo from other sources, enables it to report in its turn to the General Assembly on the manner in which the States referred to in the said resolutions are complying with the General Assembly's recommendations.

2. Observers shall at all times bear in mind that the purpose of their activities is to assist the Committee in fulfilling its essential task of improving relations between Greece and her northern neighbours.

¹⁷⁰ Cfr. A/935, 2nd Report of UNSCOB, Annexes, sects.3 and 4, 2 Aug. 1949.

3. Observers shall take every opportunity of submitting to the Special Committee any suggestions, which, in their opinion, might lead the Special Committee to make recommendations for the improvement of good-neighbourly relations between Greece on the one hand and Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia on the other.

4. In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, observers shall not concern themselves with or report on matters, which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state.

5. In the discharge of their duties observers shall receive instructions only from the Special Committee through the official channel as latter defined.

6. Members of the observation service shall be guided by the fact they are working for the highest international body: the United Nations. They shall discharge their duties accordingly, and behave with impartiality, loyalty, conscientiousness and tact.

7. In more specific terms, the provisional 'Observation Service Manual' lays down the subjects on which observers shall undertake inquiries:

The manner in which Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia on the one hand, and Greece on the other hand, are complying with the recommendations of the General Assembly;

The extent to which good-neighbourly relations exist between the four countries;

Military and logistic assistance which might be rendered from outside Greece in any form whatsoever to armed groups fighting against the Greek Government;

The manner in which frontier conventions are being respected wherever they exist, or the practice customarily followed at the frontiers:

Removal and repatriation of children; and Where applicable, questions concerning international refugees.

9. The section in the provisional 1950 'Observation Service Manual' dealing with the question of witness interrogation is similar to that in the 1949 'Handbook for Observers', and is now entitled 'Hearing of Third Parties'. The new section reads as follow:

33. Observers may interrogate all person they consider are able to supply them with information of interest to the Special Committee not only in the examination of specific points but also to obtain general background material.

34. The observers are strongly recommended to select the persone they wish interrogate for themselves, rather than rely on a choice made by the various liaison services concerned.

35. Member of the public, and in particular, duly accredited Press correspondents will, generally speaking, be admitted to hearing of third parties, except in cases where their presence may compromise the personal security of such third parties or hinder the Special Committee's tasks of conciliation. Observers should bear in mind, however, that their own opinions and comments on the statements made by third parties are exclusively for the information of the Special Committee.

36. Persons whose statements the observers intend to record are to be informed prior to their interrogation that they are not before a court but before representatives of the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans. They will be told that such statements as they make care to make will, at a relative early date, be brought to the knowledge of the State Members of the United Nations and subsequently published throughout the world.

37. Observers shall specifically inquire of persons whom they propose to interrogate whether the latter desire their identity to be kept secret, in which case the persons concerned shall be informed of what precautions are observed to that end, namely:

- (i) Statements of the identity of the person concerned are taken down by the observers, no other person being present except for a United Nations interpreter who is sworn to absolute secrecy.
- (ii) Statements of the identity are indicated in published documents only by a symbol comprising a letter of the alphabet and a number.
- (iii) Documents which contain full identification are kept in a safe at UNSCOB headquarters and will not be made public.¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ Cfr. A/1307, 3rd Report of UNSCOB, Annexes, sect. 3, 31 July 1950.

Chapter 12

The structure of UNSCOB

The architecture of UNSCOB rely, of course, on the resolution which established it, and the follow ones.

The framework of the Special Committee, however, had a degree of autonomy.

UNGAR 109 (II) stated:

9. [The Assembly] *decides* that the Special Committee

(1) *Shall consist* of representatives of Australia, Brazil, China, France, Mexico, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the United Kingdom, and the United States, seats being held open for Poland and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

(2) *Shall have* its principal headquarters in Salonika and with the cooperation of the four Governments concerned shall perform its functions in such places and in the territories of the four States concerned as it may deem appropriate;

(...)

(4) *Shall determine* its own procedure, and may establish such sub-committees as it deems necessary.

For the already mentioned political reasons, Poland and USSR declined to nominate representatives and, consequently to participate to the activities of the Special Committee, which remained formed with nine members (plus one alternate for each state).

The Special Committee also made itself available of the authority granted in paragraph 9 (4) of the above-mentioned UNGAR, to establish subsidiary bodies.

Facing the real problem into organizing a real monitoring mechanism of the borders of Greece with Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia and consult (at least in theory) with the governments of the 4 countries, UNSCOB decided by its decision of 27 November 1947 to set up observation groups. The groups were mandated to observe and report continuously to the Committee to what extent good neighbourly relations exist on the relevant frontier areas, and also, by its resolution of 10 December 1947 to organize its study and programme of work with respect to the other matters dealt with the recommendations of the general Assembly, by the establishment of three sub-committees responsible broadly for general observation:

political problems, and refugees and minority questions respectively. The three sub-committees comprise delegates from:

1st – France, the Netherlands, USA;

2nd – Australia, China, Mexico; 3rd – Brazil, UK, Pakistan.

On 23 December 1947, the expansion of the activities of the Special Committee led to the establishment of a fourth sub-committee, tasked to deal with budgetary and administrative matters, formed by delegates of China, the Netherlands and UK.¹⁷²

Since the beginning, the Special Committee saw the expansion and articulation of its own structure in consideration that the establishing resolution was a strong political act, but did not take properly into consideration the situation on the ground.

The decision of the Special Committee (or resolution, according the UNSCOB vocabulary) provide more details on the path to be taken in order to establish, progressively a more articulated framework in order to carry out the mandate assigned by the General Assembly. Thus, it should be noted the apparent lack of the realism by the Special Committee in the decision to dispatch its observers on the both sides of the borders with Greece. UNSCOB (and UNGA of

¹⁷² Cfr. A/521, 1st Interim Report of UNSCOB, p.7, para 7, 9 Jan. 1948.

course) was well aware about the hostile position of the three socialist block countries on deployment of foreign observers on their own territories, but a position of principle should be made and the instructions of the General Assembly should be implemented, regardless the situation. Then, facing the closed doors of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, the Special Committee and then the General Assembly could deal with, but the request of deployment of its personnel was a mandatory step from UNSCOB.

The Committee,

Having carefully studied the resolution of the general Assembly of the United Nations of 21 October 1947,

(...)

Decides

1. Subject to the co-operation of the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia respectively being obtained, to maintain such observation groups near and on both sides of the above mentioned frontiers, such groups to be under the authority of the Committee and composed by personnel supplied by the nations represented on the Committee;
2. To instruct such groups to observe and to report continuously to the Committee what extent good neighbourly relations exist on those frontiers: and
3. To request the Secretary-General to obtain the consent of the four governments mentioned to the establishment of such observation groups on their respective territories.¹⁷³

After the obtaining the consent of Greece and the refusal of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, the Committee made other steps to put its machinery in full function.

The principal attentions was devoted to the politico-diplomatic arm of UNSCOB, the sub-Committees in December 1947, and secondly the observer groups, another resolution of the Special Committee stated:

‘The Special Committee established by the General Assembly on 21 October has been directed to study problems of a most varied nature which may, in general, be divided into three categories:

- I. Those deriving from paragraph 6, sub-paragraph (1), of the Special Committee’ terms of reference, which direct the Committee to observe and examine to what extent the Government concerned comply with the relevant recommendations. The Implementation of this decision implies the necessity of being constantly informed of problems bearing upon frontier questions. Groups of observers will be established, who will discharge their duties by travelling from place to place, or remaining at permanent posts. It is essential that constant liaison be maintained between observers and UNSCOB.
- II. Political problems, namely those deriving from paragraph 6, sub-paragraph (1), as affected by paragraph 5, sub-paragraphs (1) and (2). UNSCOB thus has the duty of assisting in the re-establishment as soon as possible normal diplomatic and good neighbourly relations and in concluding frontier conventions, etc. These problems, which are of a less urgent nature than those mentioned above, call for detailed and careful study.
- III. problems arising out of the presence of refugees and the practicability of concluding agreements for the transfer of minorities.

These problems call for long-term study.

¹⁷³ Cfr. A/AC16/5, resolution adopted by UNSCOB on 27 Nov. 1947 (A/521, p. 25, Annex 6).

The time has come to set up three subcommittees, each of them responsible for one of the categories of problems above-mentioned and to make early suggestions for a programme of assistance to each of the four governments concerned.

Each of these will be composed of three representatives. The other members of UNSCOB may participate at any time in the work of these sub-committees.

Each sub-committees will elect its Chairman and set to work immediately.

All sub-committees will, from time to time, prepare reports for discussion and approval by UNSCOB.

After approval these reports may, under paragraph 11 of the resolution, be the basis of interim reports to be forwarded to the Secretary-General for transmission to the Members of the United Nations prior of the next session for the Assembly.¹⁷⁴

The newly established Special Committee (and sub-committees) faced immediately financial problems with the organization, which was requested to provide the funds for the functioning, estimated of US\$ 553.000 for assets and personnel. While the Secretary-General felt that the budget or UN working Fund could face the expenses in providing requested secretariat staff, he could not face the air and ground asset demanded.¹⁷⁵

Facing this kind of problems the Special Committee answered rapidly adapting its structure deciding on 24 February 1948 to establish only two sub-committees, the First tasked to deal with observer groups and budgetary matters, the Second to work with political and administrative questions and the problems of political refugees and minorities. On 27 May 1948 the Special Committee decided to establish an *ad hoc* Committee to sit in Salonika during its absence in Geneva. This *ad hoc* body was tasked to carry on the routinary work connected with the reports from the observer groups on the field (including emergency situations) and to draw the attention of the Special Committee to all questions within its competence.¹⁷⁶

The international character of the observation groups was ensured by the participation of observers, a mixture of civilian (in majority former military and/or diplomats) and military in service, from Brazil, China, France, Mexico, the Netherlands, USA and UK and by the attachment of a member of the UN Secretariat as secretary to each group. It should be noted that Australia and Pakistan, both represented in the Special Commission, did not provided personnel to the observation groups. The reasons of Australia to not participate on the field activities emerged in other chapters of the work, while the reasons of Pakistan were, till now unclear.¹⁷⁷

The Hotel 'Mediterranean' in Salonika was the executive office of the observation groups.

The establishment of the observations groups was not easy and only the groups 1,2,3,4 and 6 were established and started to work in their respective AORs for the end of February of 1949, while the group 5 and the reserve one, the seventh, were activated only for the end of May 1948. This due to the lack of personnel provided by the Member States.¹⁷⁸

The deployment of the observer groups, of which structure remain similar along all the mission, was the following: the group 1 monitored part of the border with Albania starting from the Ionian Sea; the group 2 part of the border of Albania and Yugoslavia. The group 3 fully tasked to control the border between Greece and Yugoslavia and a small portion of the

¹⁷⁴ Cfr. A/AC16/15/Rev. 2, resolution adopted by UNSCOB on 10 December 1947, (A/521, Annex 7, pp. 26-7).

¹⁷⁵ Cfr. A/AC16/19, Annex 13; A/521, p. 41.

¹⁷⁶ Cfr. A/574, 1st Report of UNSCOB, 30 June 1948.

¹⁷⁷ Cfr. A/574, par. 15.

¹⁷⁸ The observation groups were formed each with: 4-6 international observers, provided by the Member States; 2 radio operators, 1 interpreter, 1 precis writer, 1 auto mechanic. Those were provided by the UN, or with its own Secretariat staff or contractors, or locally-recruited personnel. The ground transport assets of each group included 1 large motor car (command or weapons carrier type e.g. Dodge WC 56 - US Army Command Vehicle), 1-2 radio jeep (type Willis), 1-2 jeep (type Willis), 1-2 jeep trailer).

Greek-Bulgaria border, the groups 4, 5 and 6 along the Greek-Bulgarian border till Turkey. There was also a seventh group of observers, in reserve, and a field support group, both located in Salonika.¹⁷⁹

While the field activities were carried out between Salonika and the northern borders of Greece, from summer 1948 onward the Special Committee seat in Athens. UNSCOB, after the first reshuffling of 1947-8, continued to its authority to establish *ad hoc* committees as it thought fit, like in May 1949, three *ad hoc* committees visited the border areas and presented a preliminary survey at a meeting of the Special Committee held on 23 May, while many individual members of UNSCOB visited the AOR of several observation groups.¹⁸⁰

The experience gained in the daily activities led UNSCOB to model its structure accordingly. In January 1949, the Special Committee began a comprehensive review of its observation system in the light of the new TOR directing it to continue to utilize observation groups to observe and report on the response of Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia, to the demand of the General Assembly to not to furnish aid to the Greek insurgents.

The observation groups were based initially on ad hoc basis in January 1948 with personnel and equipment largely supplied by the nations represented in the Special Committee in the absence of adequate budgetary resources of its own.¹⁸¹

Specific United Nations funds, were however, allotted in the 1949 budget for essential needs, including pay a daily allowance to the observers and the entire pay of the auxiliary staff (interpreters, drivers, mechanics and typist) as well as the maintenance of the groups equipment.

At central level UNSCOB counted the Principal Secretary (Raoul Aglion, France), Deputy Principal Secretary. The support staff included 3 Political Affairs Officers, 2 Legal Officers, 1 Chief Administrative Officer, 1 Finance Officer, 1 Press Officer, 3 interpreters, 3 translators, 2 verbatim reporters, 5 precis writers, 7 administrative assistants and secretaries.

The Greek Government attached to UNSCOB HQ a Liaison Delegation formed by 4-5 civilians, 1 military (colonel level).

As above-mentioned, seven of the nine Member States represented on the Special Committee had supplied the observers in 1948. Since the Committee appreciated, for obvious political and image reasons, to have an equal representation among the participants, it urged all Government concerned to deploy not less than five observers each. In reality, this did not happened and on 1 August 1949, the observers were two from Brazil, four from China, seven from France, two from Mexico, four from the Netherlands, eight from UK and seven from USA.

¹⁷⁹ The field support team included 3 Administrative Officers, 4 radio operators, 1 precise writer, 3 drivers, 1 car repairer, 1 radio repairer.

¹⁸⁰ Cfr. A/935, 2nd Report of UNSCOB, 2 Aug. 1949.

¹⁸¹ In particular the air assets were provided by the US. At central level was established a small air unit, tasked to facilitate the movement of the observation groups and initially formed by 1 C-47 cargo/passengers plane, 1 C-45 liaison plane, 1 helicopter H-13, 1 L-5 light airplane (artillery observer type), with the initial staffing of 7 pilots, 1 navigator, 3 crew chiefs, 2 radio operators, 4 air operations assistants, all US military personnel. Later, the number of L-5 increased to five and the helicopters to three, in order to ensure the highest mobility to the observation groups and consequently the air unit increased its staff accordingly. The ground transport fleet was almost totally provided by the US and UK forces, which also provided, through the help of a British Army logistic unit located nearby the Hotel 'Mediterranean' in Salonika, additional spare parts and repair capability to the Special Committee support wing. The UNSCOB's aircraft and helicopters were painted in silver dope finish, and featured the letters OHE (Greek for UN) on one side of the fuselage and ONU on the other. The vehicles were also marked with the letters OHE. The observers had their own national military uniform (when military) or civilian clothes; all the personnel had a harm brassard in UN-blue and OHE and ONU letters in white. The white color scheme for vehicles and aircraft and UN-blue beret/helmet was adopted in 1956 for the operation in the Suez Canal and Sinai Peninsula operation. It should be noted that the US and British support to the UNSCOB was part of the propaganda paraphernalia close to the insurgents.

In order to link better the observation system on the field and the offices of UNSCOB in Athens and with UN at central level, a group of Political Affairs Officer was dispatched from the Secretariat. They, assigned in one to each observation group, were mandated to advise generally on United Nations procedure and to participate in the drafting of observation groups' reports, 'in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter and in conformity with practice and usage of all United Nations organs'. Despite the solemn language the dispatch and the role of the Political Affairs Officers remained one the weak points of the observation machinery. They, drawn from a Secretariat under construction and without clear rules, despite the pressure of the administrative chief of the mission, the French Principal Secretary Raoul Aglion¹⁸² constantly refused to accompanying the observation groups in their field trips and remained in Salonika, with the hope to be re-assigned as soon as possible to Athens or, better, to return to Flushing Meadows (where at time the Secretariat was provisionally located, before to move in the present Headquarters in Manhattan in 1952). UNSCOB, from mid-1948 used Salonika as operational HQ, while for Athens, designated site for the national delegations of the Special Committee, it was experienced considerable difficulties in finding suitable accommodations for the delegations and for the office activities, due to the poor conditions of housing of the Greek capital.

In order to supervise efficiently its observation groups from Salonika, Brig. Gen. H. W. D. MacDonald from UK was selected by the Special Committee and appointed as Chief Observer. The Chief Observer, which was assisted by four deputies (also them British military), and the secretariat operated and administered the observation groups from a technical point of view according to the instruction issued by the Special Committee. The Chief Observer was the sole channel of communication between individual delegations and the observers on matter related to their duties.

The Sub-Committee 1 has continued to be responsible, under instructions from the Special Committee, for organizing the work of the observation groups and for the preliminary examination of their reports. As further step in reorganizing the Special Committee's work, an Advisory Committee (ab initio named Committee of Experts) on which each delegation was represented on technical matters and to supervise the efficient administration of the observation groups in accordance with the instructions.

Five months after the cessation of the hostilities, UNSCOB decided make a reduction in the number of the observers operating in the field. The Committee agreed that the calm situation along the Greek-Yugoslavia border and the elimination of insurgent forces around the frontiers with Albania and Bulgaria require the reassessment of the observation machinery and the reduction took effect on 15 June 1950.¹⁸³

The evolution of the military situation in Greece, especially close to the borders with Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, with the withdrawal of Belgrade from the group of states which supported the insurgents and the defeats that they suffered especially in 1949, led the Special

¹⁸² 13.04.2004 Los Angeles Times Obituaries. 'Raoul Aglion, respected diplomat, jurist, and author, passed on March 14, 2004. Mr. Aglion served a distinguished life of service.

During WWII, he was appointed Delegate of General De Gaulle to the US. After the war, he participated in drafting the constitution of the UN, and addressed the closing session of the General Assembly in 1945 in the name of France. His work for the UN included serving as Director of the Economic Department. He was also one of the first Chiefs of Mission sent to various countries to establish peace and justice and to help the poor and dispossessed. Mr. Aglion was the recipient of medals and honors too numerous to mention from around the world, including Officier de la Legion d'Honneur of France. After his service to the UN, Mr. Aglion's diplomatic career included Counselor to the French embassies in Cuba and Venezuela, Charge' de Mission in the cabinet of the Prime Minister of France, and Commercial Counselor in Los Angeles. Mr. Aglion is the author of many books on law and history, the most recent of which, "Roosevelt and de Gaulle" was awarded the history prize of the Academie Francaise. (...)

¹⁸³ Cfr. A/1307, 3rd Report of UNSCOB, 31 July 1950.

Committee to apply some changes in the mechanism introducing more flexibility on the observation system.

Those changes, or confirmation of previous arrangements, included:

- (a) All observers would have their permanent base in Salonika;
- (b) Under special instructions from the Chief Observer. Teams, each consisting of not less than two observers with ancillary personnel, would be sent for specific periods in the field. On completion of their mission, teams would be relieved by fresh teams from Salonika and would return to the permanent base;
- (c) The Chief Observer would ensure in his rotation of personnel that a team of at least two observers would be present at all time in each of six zones of observation. Minor alterations would be made in the zone boundaries in order to correspond with the revised method of operation;
- (d) To facilitate the operation of these teams, advance bases would be maintained at Ioannina, Kastoria, Serres, Kavalla, Alexandroupolis and Salonika, the last named being would provide accommodation and be maintained by a permanent staff.

At the same time, the system of routine monthly reports from the observation groups was replaced by reports submitted by each team of observers on return from their tour of duty in the field. The reports submitted by the various teams are coordinated and presented to the Special Committee for the Greek-Albanian, Greek-Yugoslav and Greek-Bulgarian frontier areas respectively. The reorganized system of frontier observation become effective on 1 January 1950 and with some minor changes due to a subsequent reduction in the number of observers (and support staff as well) remained in effect till the end of the activities of UNSCOB in 1951.¹⁸⁴

During 1950 and the beginning of 1951, the Special Committee continued to work through its two main sub-Committees and a Technical Sub-Committee. The evolution of the military situation impacted of course also at the central level of UNSCOB. In fact, in March 1951 the Special Committee abolished the three bodies and replaced it with four *ad hoc* committees (A, B, C, D).

The *ad hoc* Committee A was tasked to conduct interrogations of witnesses and other form of investigation of the exact nature of the aid and assistance rendered from abroad to the Greek guerrilla movement;

The *ad hoc* Committee B was charged to interrogate the international refugees;

The *ad hoc* Committee C was responsible to study and report on broadcast on behalf of the Greek guerrilla movement and radio propaganda against Greece emanating from the 'Free Greece' radio station;

The *ad hoc* Committee D maintained the liaison with observation groups, through the Chief Observer, in relation to problems of organization and administration, and to report thereon to the Special Committee.¹⁸⁵

When UNSCOB was replaced by the Balkan Sub-Commission of the UNPOC, the UNAGR 508 (VI) specified that the size of the Sub-Commission should be between three to five members, with it seat at UN Headquarters in New York. Under the terms of part B of the UNGAR 508 (VI) the Sub-Commission was to have the authority to dispatch 'such observers, as it deems necessary'.^A

¹⁸⁴ Cfr. A/1307, 3rd Report of UNSCOB, 31 July 1950, Annexes pp. 29-30.

¹⁸⁵ Cfr. A/1857, 4th Report of UNSCOB, 2 Aug. 1951.

t its first meeting in Paris on 31 January 1951 on 31 January, the Sub-Commission decided, in accordance with its terms of reference and at the request of Greek Government, to send observers to the frontier areas to that country. It invited the Member States represented on the Sub-Commission - Colombia, France, Pakistan, Sweden and the USA – each to make an observer available to the Sub-Commission. The United Kingdom, furthermore, was invited make an observer available to serve as Principal Observer. The Governments concerned took action accordingly.¹⁸⁶

In 1953, at the request of Greece, the Balkan Sub-Commission agreed to reduce the number of observers to three, beside the Chief Observer made available by the United Kingdom.¹⁸⁷

On 31 July 1954, the last UN military observers were withdrawn from Greece.

A better understanding of UNSCOB could not ignore the issue of delegations, their composition, size and stance.

The delegations accredited to the Special Committee consisted of a representative and a deputy representative (sometimes named as alternate member) for votes, administrative and diplomatic activities. In addition, most delegations have one of more consultants, advisers, military advisers or assistants, as well as secretaries, attached to them.¹⁸⁸

The member of the delegations sit in the Special Committee as representatives of their respective governments and are appointed, and payed, by them.

In a body which belong to the general Assembly, the issue of the chairmanship became relevant. The method of electing a Chairman was discussed at the second meeting of the Special Committee. The principle of rotation was adopted. It was agreed that the Chairman should vote as a representative of his government and should be free to express his opinion and to vote whenever he so desired.

At its 110th meeting, held on 10 September 1948, the Special Committee decided that the method of electing a Chairman should change. As from 4 October 1948, the Chairman would be elected in his personal capacity and would serve for six months and this scheme ran until the end of activities of UNSCOB.

The Special Sub-Commission with the sub entities, Member States and representatives and military observers on the ground changed substantially from UNSCOB, especially for reasons related to the dimension, much smaller of the predecessor. Consequently, it was not established any specific structure. The observers, due to a very limited number, operated like an observation team of UNSCOB. The only additional presence was the figure of the Chief of the Military observers, voluntarily provided by UK, and this just in order to establish a minimal functional hierarchy. The Member States representatives never visited the ground and operated between Paris and New York. Like the UNSCOB, the Sub-Commission included a delegate and an alternate member. The Secretariat, provided a small secretariat for both entities (Paris/New York and Greece) with administrative and support staff.

¹⁸⁶ Cfr. *Yearbook of the United Nations* 1952, p. 291.

¹⁸⁷ Cfr. *Yearbook of the United Nations* 1953, p. 249.

¹⁸⁸ Among them, the US delegate was the US Navy Admiral (ret.) Alan Goodrich Kirk (30 October 1888 – 15 October 1963). After the retirement from the US Navy as full admiral, Kirk embarked on a diplomatic career, and subsequently served in several US embassies abroad, beginning with the combined posting of US Ambassador to Belgium/US Envoy to Luxembourg (resident in Brussels, Belgium), 1946–49; as US Ambassador to the Soviet Union, 4 July 1949 to 6 October 1951; and finally as US Ambassador to Taiwan, 7 June 1962 to 16 January 1963.

Chapter 13

Relations with the States

1) Relations with T.C.Cs

There are not documents on any agreement that may have been entered in force between the UN and the Member States, which provided personnel to UNSCOB (the nationals of the Member States already part of the Secretariat dispatched as support staff of the Special Committee are not included among those) and its observation groups.

It was already noted that the composition of the observation groups was limited to those states represented on the Special Committee itself.¹⁸⁹

Giving that the observation groups were in effect subsidiary bodies of the Special Committee, it may have been perceived that no special agreements between the United Nations and the government of the Member States participants at UNSCOB were necessary. No particular problems appear to have risen in the relations between the TCCs and the UN. (2)

Among the TCCs, of course the relation of the Special Committee with the most influential members, like USA and UK, deserve a special attention.

Initially the stance of the US vis-à-vis Greece within the UN framework was marked with prudence, in order to not add another element into the growing file with USSR.

Progressively, and according to the evolution of Washington stance, it change accordingly, and utilization of the UN as tool to protect and promote the US interest in the region emerged dramatically.

The US attitude toward promoting the role of UNSCOB was determined by its policy of energetic leadership. The Department of State considered UNSCOB as a prime means of conducting national foreign policy and the most effective tool for preserving the territorial integrity of Greece and infinitely preferable dispatch UN observers than US troops and far less costly, even if Washington provided air and land transportation, serial photography and signal equipment.

Greece, despite received massive military equipment and a number of military trainers, largely preferred a direct involvement of US and requested that non-UN observers would be deployed across more than a dozen observation posts on the northern borders. The request was bluntly rejected and the US perceived the general policy of Greece as an attempt to involve directly the US (and other Western partners) in the conflict in order to solve the long-standing problems with the northern neighbours.

Despite this, the US used all the means allowed to push the results of the investigations in a manner that put the neutrality issue in a secondary element. This stance was also recorded in the work of the Commission of Investigation, where the chief US observer, the Colonel Alan Miller, was given orders to inquire only on incidents likely to produce convincing evidences that would be in line with the goals of the foreign policy of Washington. This stance arrived to the point that UNSCOB was request to share intelligence and other military information with Greek forces.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ With the exceptions of Australia, Poland and USSR, even with different reasons for their absences; the last two absents at the UNSCOB but with vacant seat kept for them, for the first, present with a delegate/delegation, but without personnel participating to the field activities.

¹⁹⁰ The only issue emerged was the call of the General Assembly and the Special Committee to provide the necessary personnel for the ordinary functioning of UNSCOB and its observation groups, which played an important role in monitoring the military operations on the ground.

The lack of a proper feedback from the Member States into providing the personnel for the observation groups inaugurated the tradition of the reluctant answer into providing military, police and civilian personnel to the peacekeeping missions which followed UNSCOB.

The political line of the observation groups was often raised by the US delegate(s) at the plenary meetings of the Committee, but faced the hostility of some other delegates which kept firm the position on the retaining the impartial status of UNSCOB. The observers were reminded to investigate to investigate the attitude of Greece toward the neighbours and *vice versa*. The observers were instructed to scrupulously avoid creating any impression that they were substitutes for the Greek frontier authorities.

Initially, Britain vigorously objected against any proposed abandonment of impartiality and UNSCOB must not give the impression that its main task to support Greece against its northern neighbours. The British delegates also objected that the US members of the observation groups were too close to their compatriots which trained and advised the Greek forces.

The British stance highly irritated Washington, which have a clear vision on the work partition on Greece. For the US, the UN role was to limited to Greece's external problems, preferably achieving in putting the responsibility of these problems to USSR and satellite states in the region. The Western powers, in reality the US almost alone, would have the sole responsibility for internal matters and restore them to order, as chaos was conducive to Communist infiltration and would facilitate the Soviet involvement in Greece. Thus, the USSR could be prevented from reinforce its presence in the region and the US could implement the Truman Doctrine in the wake of Britain's forfeit of control over Greece without being trapped in direct military involvement.

It is a matter of fact that the British position and relation with UNSCOB had a different basis that the US. The US supported the UN presence in Greece as a tool which facilitate their own policies in the Balkans and Central-Eastern Mediterranean, while UK openly was against any UN presence there. London see the UN presence, in whatever way, in the country as an interference on the political role played in Greece, implemented also through a massive military presence.

The concern of Great Britain was that an external, even impartial, entity could create a precedent for intromission in other territories where the British presence was formally accepted, like colonies and former LoN mandates. In this light Britain looked twice, but without success, the support of France.

The position rely on the situation emerging after WWII, where UK' military, diplomatic and economic power diminished dramatically and this situation forced it to relinquish the support to Greece in March 1947 to the US, which in line with the Truman Doctrine was subsequently assumed. After that, Britain's attitude toward the UNSCOB changed, but remained substantially negative.

It should be specified that Britain remained in the picture having the overwhelming majority of the training and advisory programme of the Greek military forces and police services until the end of the war (being progressively replaced by US instructors, with the notable exception of the Navy and Coast Guard, which only in late '60s saw the arrival of US advisors).

Vis-à-vis the UNSCOB operation and architecture, Britain was contemptuous with the lack of any enforcement power, stressing that in this way the Special Committee was just a mere replica of the Commission of Investigation which according to the London view proved to be completely ineffective as a deterrent to the situation in the northern borders of Greece.

UNSCOB was perceived by the Foreign Office as potentially destabilizing tool. In fact if the Special Committee failed and the observation were withdrew and disbanded, the UN would be seen, as just established, as incapable as was the LoN.

Despite the above mentioned blames adressed to the US, UK also requested that the Special Committee would take into account political considerations in its work, like to refrain from reporting or dealing with certain subjects, such as exonerating Yugoslavia from supporting

the Greek insurgents (which would be embarrassing for Tito) or intervening on behalf of abducted Greek children, which, according, to London, only arouse the antagonism with the socialist block countries and aborting any possibility of having back those children.¹⁹¹

Despite a large number of personnel among the observers, important assets and logistic support provided to the Special Committee, this was considered a futile and perhaps dangerous by London which arrived to believe that without UNSCOB the possibility of reconciliation between Greece and some of its neighbours (in particular Yugoslavia) would be easier. Further, the Foreign Office was convinced that the presence of UNSCOB had a negative effect on the morale and combat capabilities of the Greek forces.¹⁹²

2) Relations with host states

In reality the Special Committee had relations only with Greece, while Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia refusing to deal with, and interacted only with the General Assembly.

It was intended that UNSCOB should function in Bulgaria, Albania and Yugoslavia, as well Greece. This never came about. They were considered undoubtedly ‘involved states’ aside the ‘State concerned’ definition.¹⁹³

In fact, although the establishing resolution of UNSCOB designated the HQ in Salonika, it was envisaged that ‘with the cooperation of the four Government concerned [UNSCOB] shall perform its functions in such places and in the territories of the four States concerned as it may deem appropriate’.¹⁹⁴ According to the spirit and the letter of the UNGAR, Albania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and as well Greece, were considered ‘host nations’. However, as above mentioned, the three states of the socialist block never allowed to the observers of UNSCOB to operate within their territories.

The relations of the UN with the Member (and not Member) States are based on the voluntary regime and this was the same for UNSCOB. So far, as Greece was concerned in requesting an action from the UN, the Assembly had called upon her to co-operate also in studying the possibility of voluntary transfers of minority and voluntary repatriation of refugees;¹⁹⁵

further, UNSCOB’s principal HQ was to be located in Greece and the Secretary-General was requested to assign to the Special Committee staff adequate to enable it to perform its to perform its duties and he [the Secretary-General] was also tasked to: ‘enter into standing arrangement with each of the four Governments concerned to assure the Special Committee, so far as it may find necessary to exercise its functions within their territories, of full freedom of movement and all necessary facilities for the performances of its functions’.

In the real world, the above-mentioned part of the UNGAR 109 (II), would find no implementation between UN and Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. For Greece, despite was the only real ‘host nation’ there was not signed any formal agreement, in the establishment of a legal framework for the operations of UNSCOB or SOMA.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹¹ US Department of State memo, *UN Observation of Greek Frontiers*, Washington, 4 March 1948, USNA501.BB Balkan/3-448.

¹⁹² Cfr. US Department of State memo on *US policy with respect to UNSCOB*, 10 Jan. 1950, PRO, FO, 371/87703/RG1072/2.

¹⁹³ Cfr. British Embassy, Washington DC, FO, 16 May 1950, PRO, FO 371/87704/RG1072/18.

¹⁹⁴ Cfr. UNGAR 109 (II), para. 9 (2).

¹⁹⁵ Cfr. UNGAR 109 (II), para. 5, 2, 10.

¹⁹⁶ SOMAs and SOFAs are bilateral or multilateral treaties that define the legal position of military forces, police and civilian personnel deployed by one or more states or by an international organization in the territory of another state with the latter's consent. They normally deal with such issues as the entry and departure of foreign personnel, the carrying of arms, taxation, the settlement of claims, and the modalities for the exercise of civil and criminal jurisdiction over members of the visiting force or mission.

The UN and other international actors have also developed distinct arrangements regulating the immunities and privileges of peace support operations [new term which include peacekeeping, peacebuilding, peacemaking, peace restoring and peace enforcement missions, but the SOFA/SOFA applies also to the humanitarian

However, Greece, in its accession to the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the UN, signed on 29 December 1947, together with the declarations of co-operation from a number of officials, was considered fully answering to the spirit and the letter of the request included in the UNGAR 109 (II) and the issue of the establishing of a SOMA/SOFA was not raised.

The Greek government indicated its approval of the operation of the observation groups, and as well as UNSCOB, upon its territory.¹⁹⁷

As consequence of this decision, military and civilian liaison personnel (on the field only military officers were deployed) were made available to the UNSCOB and to the observation groups.

The relations between Greece and UNSCOB, aside to a formal legal *entente*, were a highly political element in the life of the Special Committee. Thus, were marked by a wide range of perceptions and behaviors, which followed the general politico-military situation on the field and as well as the situation emerging for the Cold War.

In the 1st Interim Report of UNSCOB the position of Athens was reported as: ‘...The Government of Greece has assured the Special Committee of its desire and readiness to cooperate fully with the Committee’s work and it has been in constant and close touch with the Committee through its duly accredited Liaison Officers...’.¹⁹⁸

Similarly, the Special Committee constantly received the complaints of one party (Greece, of course) on the lack of cooperation of the other parties involved, as mentioned in the 4th report of UNSCOB, the last one produced, which, in a way could be considered like a summary of the activities of the body.

‘33. Complaints by the Greek Government have also been transmitted by the Greek Liaison Service to the Special Committee for appropriate action. In view of the continued co-operation of the Greek Government with the Special Committee, the latter has had full facilities for investigation of Greek complaints in Greece. On the other hand, owing to the absence of any co-operation on the part of Albania and Bulgaria, it has been found impossible

assistance and disaster recovering operations]. Generally speaking, these legal regimes offer different answers to the same basic question which is how to reconcile the divergent interests of the sending state or organization on the one hand and those of the host state on the other hand, in particular as regards the exercise of jurisdiction in the territory of the host state over the visiting force or mission and its members.

Despite the increasingly widespread use of SOFAs and SOMAs during the 20th Century, a combination of three factors has prevented the emergence of a uniform legal regime in this field comparable, for example, to the law of diplomatic relations. First, states send their military, police and civilian personnel abroad for different non-hostile purposes, including exercises, technical and advisory missions, and large-scale peacekeeping operations. Secondly, the operational circumstances surrounding the deployment of foreign personnel differ drastically from one case to another. Legal arrangements devised for a stable and secure operational environment will almost certainly be unsuitable and inappropriate in post-conflict situations or cases where effective governmental authority is lacking in the host state.

Thirdly, great powers tend to rely on their dominant position to secure more favourable conditions of stay for their forces abroad than they are prepared to grant to foreign forces present in their own territory. The combined effect of the diverse objectives pursued by foreign personnel, different considerations of military and operational necessity, and the political disparities between sending states and host states means that SOFAs and SOMAs differ widely in their terms. Even though no single legal regime governing the status of visiting forces and missions has developed in international law, several distinct regimes can nevertheless be identified, like the ones concluded in the context of structured military cooperation between politically equal partners are frequently based on the model of NATO SOFA of 1951. The Member States of the EU have thus modeled the EU SOFA of 2003, which governs the legal position of their military and civilian staff deployed within the territory of the EU for the purposes of the ESDP, on the relevant provisions of the NATO SOFA. EU, NATO and ‘coalition of willings’ are developed SOFAs/SOMAs for the increased deployment of military, police and civilian personnel abroad, out of the territories of the Member States of their respective organizations and/or group of states).

¹⁹⁷ Cfr. A/574, para 26.

¹⁹⁸ Cfr. A/521 1st Interim Report of UNSCOB, 9 Jan. 1948.

to undertake any investigation of the northern side of the frontiers concerning the Albanian and Bulgarian complaints [against alleged air and ground attacks and incursions of Greek forces in their territories], the majority of which dealt with airspace violations. However, wherever possible investigation has been undertaken regarding these complaints within Greece, but, owing to the belated receipt by the Special Committee of such complaints, any prompt investigation has proved impossible'.¹⁹⁹

The views of the Greek government were henceforth transmitted to UNSCOB through regular meetings with the liaison officers and through the submission by documents. The observation groups, when they were set up, were frequently in direct contact with the Greek armed forces units through the Liaison Officer assigned to each of the groups.

Sometimes, UNSCOB received explicit requests from the Greek authorities to be present in specific times and areas to witness the military operations, like a request issued by the Commandant of the 8th Mountain Division.²⁰⁰

Nonetheless the constitutional (as well as political objections) of the Soviet block nations, UNSCOB (and UN as well) kept all times the seats for Poland, USSR, and kept informed Albania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia informed on relevant issues and sought to assist all the four parties involved.

In this light, on 27 November 1947, the Special Committee passed a resolution requesting the UN Secretary-General to inform the Government of Poland and USSR that UNSCOB had taken note of the provision of paragraph of the resolution of the General Assembly stating that the seats were held open for Poland and USSR, and that the Special Committee expressed the hope that the Governments of those countries would see fit to participate in the work of the Committee and '.... The Secretary-General has informed the Special Committee that the Yugoslav representative has informed him that the Government of Yugoslavia would not extend any co-operation to the Special Committee. No communication has been received regarding the intentions of the Governments of Albania and Bulgaria'.²⁰¹ (13)

Few days after the UN Secretary-General transmitted to the Special Committee a formal answer from the Albanian Government, who said:

'The Albanian Government considers that the establishment of that Committee and tasks assigned to it are a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and of the other principle of unanimity of the five great Powers...the real cause of the situation in Greece is the interference of Great Britain and the United States in the internal affairs of Greece, and the Albanian Government could not recognize that Committee as having any rights because its establishment and the powers conferred upon it by the Resolution of UN General Assembly of 21 October 1947 are incompatible with the sovereignty of Albanian State. In consequence, the Government of the People's Republic of Albania declares that it cannot permit the entry into Albanian territory of the observation groups and that it considers that Committee to be illegal and not existent'.²⁰²

The Treaty of Friendship Co-operation and Aid of 16 December 1947, between Albania and Bulgaria, stressed in its communique that: 'The two delegations consider that it [the Special Committee] was created in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and in violation of

¹⁹⁹ Cfr. A/1857, 4th Report of UNSCOB, 2 Jun. 1949.

²⁰⁰ General Antonopoulou intended that the Observation Group should be present at an operation aimed at driving back towards the Albanian frontier the band deployed on that ridge, which would have enabled him to show the observers that the enemy positions continued beyond the frontier into Albanian territory, whence the bands were said to be receiving supporting fire from this country. Cfr. A/521 1st Interim Report of UNSCOB, 9 Jan. 1948, Annex 15, part I (I).

²⁰¹ Cfr. A/521, 1st Interim Report on UNSCOB, 9 Jan. 1948.

²⁰² Cfr. A/522, 2nd Interim Report, Annex C, 19 Jan. 1948.

the state sovereignty of the Balkan nations and that therefore the two Governments cannot admit it to their territory'. A similar position was recalled in the joint communique issued in the occasion of the signature of the Bulgarian-Yugoslav Alliance, on 27 November 1947.

Only on 13 January 1948 there was an answer of the Bulgarian Government to the UN Secretary-General, but without specific mention to the observation groups. It reiterated the positions made in the Security Council and General Assembly meetings held in 1947. It stated that the Commission of Investigation concerning Greek Frontier Incidents had established only that the causes of the 'civil war' in Greece lay 'in the discrimination against the national minorities and against the political opposition' and that the Bulgarian Government had not given aid to Greek guerrilla either in arms or financially or in allowing Bulgarian citizens to participate in the ranks of the Greek Democratic Army. Nevertheless, a 'verdict of guilt' had been rendered and the UN Special Committee on the Balkans had been imposed. That Committee was, in the view of the Bulgarian Government, 'against the Charter and more harmful than the first Investigation Commission' and ran 'against the principles of unanimity between the great Powers and against the sovereignty of the Balkan countries'.

The Bulgarian Government also stated that, although Bulgaria had presented counter-charges of frontier provocations against Bulgarian territory, neither the Security Council nor the General Assembly had heeded the requests to discuss them. The reply concluded with the statement that the Bulgarian Government was 'unable to give any assistance to the Special Committee on the Balkans or to admit it for investigations on its territory'.²⁰³

After the approval of the UNGARs, where Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia were again requested to cooperate with UNSCOB, the Special Committee itself approached the government concerned and asked the Secretary-General to renew the invitation to Poland and USSR to join the body and work in.²⁰⁴

Again, the 3rd report of UNSCOB reported that the Special Committee, on 21 February 1950, when the military operations against the Greek guerrilla were concluded since five months, the Secretary-General reminded, on behalf of the Special Committee, to Poland and USSR that their seat at the body continued to be held open and that there were no replies to the letters sent.²⁰⁵

Well aware of the political position of those Member States, the Special Committee, decided to try to obtain wherever possible co-operation regarding specific incidents on the basis that Albania and Bulgaria submitted complaints for the Greek situation, seeking to draw a line, more virtual than real, between the UN generally and UNSCOB. Thus, was because the complaints of the Communist Governments were submitted to the Secretary-General and never directly addressed to the Special Committee.

This issue was addressed by the UN whole and saw the role of the Secretary-General as recipients of complaints of Albania and Bulgaria against Greece and the actions taken by the Special Committee in order to improve the dialogues between the parties and play a mediation and good offices.

40. Despite the refusal of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to co-operate generally with the Special Committee or even to recognize its existence as a duly constituted and legitimate organ of the United Nations, the Special Committee continued to seek co-operation in a narrowed field.

41. Communications from Bulgarian Government to the Secretary-General reporting frontier

²⁰³ Cfr. A/574, 1st Report of UNSCOB, 30 June 1948.

²⁰⁴ Aware of the urgent need of similar co-operation from the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to enable it to fulfil its task, the Special Committee, on 17 January 1949, earnestly requested the co-operation of those Governments and expressed the hope that they would attach representatives to the Special Committee in the capacity of liaison officers. Cfr. A/935, 2nd Report of UNSCOB, 2 August 1949.

²⁰⁵ Cfr. A/1307, 3rd Report of UNSCOB, 31 July 1950.

incidents between 31 July and 16 November 1947 were forwarded for the information to the Special Committee. On 5 January 1948, the Special Committee requested the Secretary-General to notify the Bulgarian Government that it was willing to consider the latter's complaints in the same way as it was considering complaints of similar incidents on the Greek-Bulgarian border received direct from the Greek Government, and to ascertain what facilities Bulgaria would be prepared to place at the disposal of the Special Committee towards this end. No response was ever received to this communications.

42. This failure to reply is noteworthy in view of a subsequent communication from the Bulgarian Government received by the Special Committee on 20 April 1948 in reply to the Secretary-General's letter of 23 February 1948, in which the Bulgarian Government stated: 'The Secretariat of the United Nations is kept regularly informed of the frontier violations committed by Greece but this has, unfortunately, produced no results as yet. Frontier incidents provoked by Greece are still occurring'

43. in spite of the Bulgarian Government's silence in the face of its first request, the Special Committee, on 22 April 1948, telegraphed the Bulgarian Government direct concerning an alleged provocative act by Greek military forces on 4 April 1948 near Svilengrad, of which the Bulgarian Government had informed the Secretary-General in a protest which it asked the Secretary-General to transmit to the Greek Government. Because of the serious view of the incident taken by both Bulgaria and Greece and the former's threat of counter-measures if satisfaction were not obtained, the Special Committee stated in its telegram that its observers had been directed to make an examination on the Greek side of the frontier, and that the Special Committee would be prepared to accept facilities from the Bulgarian Government so that an impartial examination on both sides of the frontier might be made. It also extended its good offices to assist in the regulation of the incident and in the general establishment of friendly relations along the Greek-Bulgarian frontier.

44. After consulting his Government, the local Bulgarian commanding officer, addressed a letter, on 25 April 1948, to 'The Chairman, Observation Group 6, UNSCOB', accepting his request for an interview, which had made on 15 April 1948. On 29 April 1948 a meeting took place between Bulgarian officers, a Greek officer and the observation group on an island in the Evros (Maritza) River, the site of the incident. The Bulgarian account of the incident handed to the observation group, did not refer to the Special Committee's telegram of 22 April 1948 but merely said 'we have been informed that you have been charged by the United Nations to make enquiries on the spot regarding an incident'. The attitude of the Bulgarian officers was correct and cordial and the meeting ended with mutual expressions of good will.

45. A communique of the Press Directorate of the Bulgarian Foreign Office dated 16 May 1948, however, indicated that the interview did not reflected any change in Bulgaria's attitude toward the Special Committee. The Press Directorate declared that 'Bulgaria has not changed her attitude towards the United Nations Balkan Committee which she continue to regard as unlawful, and does not consider it possible to co-operate with it. In the above-mentioned case the Bulgarian frontier authorities admitted certain members of the Balkan Committee on the Bulgarian territory, because firstly, the investigation was arranged by the United Nations as a result of the request of the Bulgarian Government for the return of the three abducted Bulgarian frontier guards, and secondly, because the United Nations Secretariat, to which the Bulgarian Government referred itself, entrusted ad hoc these members of the Balkan Committee with carrying out the investigation. Any other interpretations of the action of the Bulgarian authorities are not in accordance with the facts or with the intentions of the Bulgarian Government'.

46. In fact, the Secretary-General had issued no such instructions. He had merely forwarded the original of the Bulgarian Government protest to the Special Committee for its information

in accordance with routine procedure. However, the Special Committee was aware of the interest of an interview carried out in such cordial manner and, despite the official reservations, hoped that it would serve as precedent for later meetings on problems of a more general nature.

47. Consequently, after discussion of a telegram, dated 15 May 1948, from the Bulgarian Government to the Secretary-General concerning alleged aerial and other violations of Bulgarian territory by Greek forces, the Special Committee, on 20 May 1948, informed the Bulgarian Government that he believed it advisable that an observation group should confer with Bulgarian frontier authorities at a convenient time and place selected by the Bulgarian Government, so that full investigation could be made of the incidents, of which the Committee had no previous knowledge. In the same communication the Special Committee took the opportunity of referring to the reply of the Bulgarian Government to the Secretary-General's communication of 23 February 1948.

48. In the first six months of the Special Committee's existence, the Secretary-General, forwarded, for information of the Special Committee, a large number of Albanian communications to the Secretary-General alleging a variety of provocative act on land, sea and air by the Greek Government in violation of Albanian territory. In spite of the previous general refusal of Albanian to co-operate, the Special Committee decided to approach the Albanian Government, as it had already approached the Bulgarian Government, in an effort to secure co-operation in examining the Albanian charges against Greece reported in the first two Albanian communications addressed to the Secretary-General after the Special Committee had been established. Consequently, the Special Committee that if it desired action to be taken to examine the incidents, the Special Committee would be willing to take action as it was doing with regard to similar incidents reported direct by the Greek Government. It also requested him to ascertain what facilities Albania would place at the disposal of the Special Committee towards this end, but stated that the Special Committee had decided 'to examine the matter, even without the co-operation of the Albanian Government, to the fullest possible extent'

49. No direct reply to the offer was received. An indirect response, dated 17 March 1948, addressed to the Secretary-General by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Albania, transmitted by the Secretary-General to the Special Committee for information, emphasized that the communications regularly addressed to the Secretary-General on Greek provocations against Albania were 'presented solely for the information of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and of public opinion'.

51. The Special Committee made yet another effort, however to investigate Greek violations of Albanian territory, alleged to have occurred between 5 and 14 April, which had been reported by Albania to the Secretary-General on 17 April 1948. On 25 May 1948, the Special Committee informed the Foreign Minister of Albania that it believed it advisable that an observation group should confer with Albania frontier authorities at a convenient time and place to be selected by the Albanian Government, so that a full investigation could be made. The Albanian Government replied to the Secretary-General that it maintained its attitude in this subject, as expressed in its communication to the Secretary-General on 23 December 1947.

52. No complaints by Yugoslavia of Greek frontier violations was brought to the notice of the Special Committee'.²⁰⁶

The Special Committee, despite the limited results of these attempts, did not abandoned the efforts to lunch a dialogue with the potential 'host nations' other than Greece. This was witnessed in another report, which followed shortly the first one:

²⁰⁶ Cfr. A/574, 1st Report of UNSCOB, para 40-52, 30 June 1948.

‘33. The Albanian and Bulgarian Governments continued to send to the Secretary-General communications alleging frontier violations by the Greek forces. These were transmitted to the Special Committee and forwarded to the observation groups for examination. The Yugoslav government on 1 July 1948, informed the Secretary-General that it had frequently during the period from 1 January to 1 July 1948 drawn the attention of the Greek Government to frontier incidents and provocations, and gave, as examples, full details of incidents alleged to have occurred early in June. This communication was forwarded to the observation groups for examination.’²⁰⁷

3) Relations with Greece

The fact that Greece was the only state where the Special Committee (and later the Sub-Commission on the Balkans of UNPOC) operated, the relation between UNSCOB and, indirectly, UN, and the real ‘host country’ deserve a special attention. As mentioned, the relations between Greece and UNSCOB were marked since the beginning by a wide range of situations and perceptions. The most visible was the dualism of it. This ran from the welcome of the international support against the communist insurgency to the disappointment of the weak dimension of it, which prolonged the war and suffering of the country.

Together with the open hostilities from the communist side, UNSCOB suffered the negative perception of the Greek officials, media and public opinion, especially at the beginning of the operation. Also on this UNSCOB was victim the mutual negative look that both sides, or warring parties, had on a neutral and impartial actor, that marked the life of the other peacekeeping missions had, so be blamed to be too keen to the stance and actions of the ‘other side’.

It worth to be mentioned how changed the relations between the UN and Greece. Between 1951 and 1954 UNSCOB was replaced by the Special Sub-Commission of UNPOC. Greece originated the end of the mandate of UNSCOB but joined the proposal, coming from USA and UK, to allow a UN presence, if necessary under the ‘Uniting for peace’ provisions on a Peace Observation Commission. The Sub-Commission was duly set up, but the observers would be sent to Greece only under a specific request of that country: ‘At its first meeting in Paris on 31 January the Sub-Commission decided, in accordance with its terms of reference and the request of Greece, to send observers to the frontier areas of that country’.

Similarly to UNSCOB, the relations between Greece and the sub-Commission, fluctuated accordingly the general political situation, domestic and international, and often the presence of the UN become a matter of Greek political parties battlefield, especially in the recurrent elections.

In a letter of 6 May 1953 the Greek²⁰⁸ Per. Rep. reiterated to the Security Council his Government’s former proposal for the establishment of a Greek-Bulgarian Commission, with or without the participation of the United Nations representatives, for the replacement of the marble points marking the two countries borders. The Secretary-General forwarded this letter to the Bulgarian Government from which he, on 22 June received a communication²⁰⁹ stating that the Bulgarian Government accepted the Greek proposal to set up a mixed commission formed with representative of the two countries but without the participation of the UN representatives. In a further exchange of letters, always trough the Secretary-General, it was arranged that the first meeting of the Greek-Bulgarian Frontier Commission (as it was named) was to take place on 10 July. An agreement was subsequently arrived at and signed at Salonika by representatives of the two Governments on 3 December 1953.

²⁰⁷ A/644, 1st Supplementary Report of UNSCOB, 10 Sept. 1948.

²⁰⁸ Cfr. A/CN 7/SC1/42.

²⁰⁹ Cfr. A/CN 7/SC1/47.

Through a letter of 26 November 1953, the Perm. Rep. of Greece²¹⁰ to the Secretary-General, the Greek Government suggested that the number of military observers of UNOG might now possibly be limited to three from 31 July 1954, or perhaps even earlier, in view of the improved relations between Greece and the two neighbouring countries.

At the 6th meeting, held on 21 December 1953, the Balkan Sub-Commission agreed to reduce the number of the military observers to three, beside the Chief Observer (made available by UK). With regard to the question of discontinuing the whole observation group, the Sub-Commission agreed to review the situation in the light of later developments at another meeting to be held before July 1954.²¹¹

On 28 May 1954, at the request of Greece, the Balkan Sub-Commission agreed to discontinue the UNMOG as of 1 August 1954.²¹²

Despite the political support of the US, the Greek political leadership, marked by a strong conservatism, fervent nationalism and *revanche* against the northern neighbours well before the communist insurgency and rely to the outcome of the Balkan wars of 1912-13 and WWI, kept a strong suspicious stance *vis-à-vis* Washington (and London, but in a lesser extent) and at the same time request a strong support against the KKE. This contradictory way emerged mainly through the editorials of the main media outlets; the real reasons of the Western support against the KKE-led revolt were looked with strong suspicions, while at the same time there were strong complaints for the alleged lack of material support to the armed forces and police services in their struggle against the communist guerrilla and questioning why there was not a direct intervention of US and British forces against communist.²¹³

UNSCOB, especially at the beginning, was widely blamed to be indulgent toward the insurgents and made selected reports avoiding stressing the political responsibility of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.²¹⁴

In some cases, the alleged partiality of the UNSCOB reports created a strong concern for the personal security of the observers due the animosity across many Greek military. The large degree of the Greek hostility toward UNSCOB was originated by the deep disappointment of Greece on the function of the Special Committee, that was not perceived as an investigation body. Further, the fact that UNSCOB did not recommended the implementation of an international to crack down the insurgency, was perceived as an additional, indirect, aid to it.

4) Relations with USSR

The relations of UNSCOB with USSR had a special position in this work, giving the political weight of the country in the new world order emerged after WWII and in the specific case, as ideological engine of the KKE insurgency and the influence that Moscow had over the neighbouring countries of Greece, deserve a special attention.

USSR, while keeping an unwavering negative stance toward UNSCOB, at same time adopted a very cautious stance with. There were issued very strict instructions to Albania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and EVS to avoid any physical attack or threat to the personal integrity of the personnel of the Special Committee and the absence of any physical attempt to the observers by the insurgents other than verbal aggression is the best evidence of it.²¹⁵

Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, according US information sources were instructed not ‘to

²¹⁰ Cfr. A/CN.7/SC1/52.

²¹¹ Cfr. *Yearbook UN 1953*, pp. 248-9.

²¹² Cfr. A/CN.7/SC1/SR7.

²¹³ Cfr. US Embassy, Athens, review of Greek press, 30 August 1948, USNA, 501.BB Balkan/8-3048.

²¹⁴ Cfr. US Embassy, Athens, to Secretary of States, 15 August 1948, USNA, 501.BB Balkan/8-1548; US Dept. of State, memo of conversation, 14 July 1948, USNA, 501.BB Balkan/7-1448.

²¹⁵ There was only a UNSCOB observer wound by a shot allegedly fired from Bulgaria in April 1950, well after the end the hostilities in Greece, while another die hurting incidentally a mine and other two die in air crash.

defy the United Nations and admit their military assistance' to the Greek insurgents.²¹⁶

Moscow was find positive for its interests that the West to perceive the Special Committee as a very effective tool instead to embark in other options, like a direct military involvement, while at the same time the communists diplomats and media at the UN and around the world labeled the action of the international organization, manipulated by the US as the main responsible of the Greek crisis.

The Soviets stressed that the imposition on Greece of the constitutional framework emerged by the referendum od 1946, put in power a 'monarcho-fascist' government,²¹⁷ UNSCOB was an 'illegal entity' voted by a 'mere mechanical majority, in violation of the principle of unanimity among the Great Powers and in violation of the spirit and the letter of the Charter of the United Nations'.²¹⁸

For Moscow the international observers were intelligence officers and agents of the imperialism working to broke the relations between Greece and Albania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and the 'democratic world'. Consequently the work of UNSCOB was biased and based on politico-ideological prejudices and the witnesses, when not under pressures or threats, were bribed and their reports were no credible.

As consequence of the UNSCOB action, Greece was no more an independent state and that the Special Committee collaborated with the Greek forces in providing and exchanging intelligence information, piloting and directing air and ground fire against the insurgents.

The pro-KKE environment (communist states, parties, unions and media) blasted the Special Committee as a propaganda organ of US and the impartiality was considered as inexistent.²¹⁹

While the prospect of the replacement of UN personnel by US forces as the result of attacks to the members of the Special Committee served as an effective measure to restrain any Soviet or Soviet-backed acts of aggression. The policy of absence of any contact with UNSCOB from the neighboury countries was coherent with USSR strategic lines and the presence of the observers did not affected the flow of support to the insurgents.

This flow changed due to external factors as well as to internal choices (the Yugoslav schism and the intrinsic politico-military weakness of the guerrilla and the wrong choices adopted). Moscow believed that the Greece would become a communist state due an internal struggle with the help of 'democratic world'. Soviet plans in Greece were frustrated by the Truman doctrine that addressed the internal problems of the country.

²¹⁶ Cfr. Copy of US Embassy, Athens, to Secretary of State, 2 August 1948, PRO FO 371/72233/R9966/G.

²¹⁷ This word was regularly used in the *notes verbales* to the UN by the Bulgarian, Albania and Yugoslavia (pre-schism of 1948) representatives in their allegations against violations of national airspace by Greek airplanes or in occasion of artillery fire of incursions of Greek forces.

²¹⁸ Cfr. US Department of State, *The problem of Greece in the 3rd Session of the GA, 1 October 1948*, PRO, FO 371/72364/R11356.

²¹⁹ US Embassy in Belgrade to US DoS, 29 June 1948, USNA 501.BB Balkan/6-2948, quoting the daily *Borba*, official house organ of the Yugoslav Communist Party.

Chapter 14

Financial Dimension

In a political organization, as it is the United Nations, all the aspects of the life of it, including administrative and financial ones, are marked by a strong political means. It is a fact that the financial dimension, and the repartition of costs, is one field where the Member States often enter in strong confrontations between them and the organization too. UNSCOB, also in this case, paved the way for a controversial aspect of the daily functioning of the entire international organization.

When UNGAR 109 (II) was approved, calling for the establishment of a Special Committee on the Balkans, the Secretary-General²²⁰ submitted a report²²¹ to the Fifth Committee of the UNGA, tasked of the Administrative & Budgetary questions, on the financial aspects on the planned operation.²²² In the report was stated that, on the assumption that UNSCO's HQ would be located in Salonika and 25 staff members of the Secretariat would be sent there from the UNHQ, the estimated cost of UNSCOB in 1947 would be \$49,640 and \$368,600 in 1948. Instead, the Fifth Committee itself increased the estimated cost to \$72,840 in 1947 and \$538,600 in 1948 (despite the increase the amount was insufficient, due to the high cost of the travels, installation, accommodation and activation of logistic services). The underestimation of the travel costs by the Secretary-General office remained important, together with the subsistence's allowances of the representatives of the Special Committee.

It is an element of interest to observe that the costs partition, the granting travel and allowances was at early steps of the peacekeeping phenomena a major problem among the Member States.

On this issue, it worth to be mentioned the statement of the Pakistani Perm. Rep. who said that if the members of the Special Committee were required to pay all their expenses only those who were vitally interested might accept to serve, with a consequent risk of deadlocks.

It should not be made difficult, he said, for non-partisan members to serve on such bodies as the Special Committee of the Balkans. He therefore favored payment from the United Nations budget of the travel expenses and part or all of the subsistence expenses of members of the Special Committee. The delegates of Mexico, Brazil, Guatemala, Belgium and China shared the view of the Pakistani diplomat, while the representatives of UK, USA, Czechoslovakia and South Africa considered that the Fifth Committee should not make a decision in this case before having considered the broad question of principle involved, giving that the delegates (and alternate) of the Special Committee were not regular staff members of the UN Secretariat but officials designates by their government.²²³

The Fifth Committee's increase of the amount indicated by the Secretary-General included the costs of travel for all the members of the Special Committee (delegates and support staff) and the cost of a \$20 *per diem* for each national representative and alternate (14 people), but

²²⁰ The Charter describes the Secretary-General as "chief administrative officer" of the Organization, who shall act in that capacity and perform "such other functions as are entrusted" to him or her by the Security Council, General Assembly, Economic and Social Council and other United Nations organs. The Charter also empowers the Secretary-General to "bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security". These guidelines both define the powers of the office and grant it considerable scope for action.

²²¹ Cfr. A/C 5/172.

²²² The Committees of the UNGA are: First Committee (International Security), Second Committee (Economic), Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian & Cultural), Fourth Committee (Decolonization), Fifth Committee (Administrative & Budgetary), Sixth Committee (Legal).

²²³ Cfr. *Yearbook of the UN 1947-1948*, p.73.

it remained intentionally unclear, giving that they were seconded by their respective government which were supposed to provide a salary and/or compensation to them.

The first UNSCOB report immediately stressed the inadequacy of the resources allocated and that further financial authorization were necessary, especially as UNSCOB decided to establishes the observation groups.

This issue was discussed at the early meetings of the Special Committee in Salonika and on 5 December a request for additional resources was addressed to the Secretary-General to provided fund considered indispensable to the proper implementation of the mandate, indicating that in order to preserve the international character of the observation groups, the operational cost should be borne by the United Nations, without further intervention of Member States.

In his first answer, the Secretary-General in substance rejected the request of additional resources,²²⁴ shortly followed by another communication agreeing that there was room for some moderate adjustments, but only for incidental expenses.²²⁵

Giving this situation, the Special Committee decided, on 16 January 1948, to accept offers of equipment and maintenance thereof which may be made by one or more Members States as an aid, the reimbursement of which the Special Committee will recommend to the next session of the General Assembly, in the event that the Secretary General's not having done so before.²²⁶

After this decision, the Secretary-General made another step to meet the needs of the Special Committee and approved in principle a request for a supplementary budget of \$164,000 and allotted fund for the period from 13 February to 31 March 1948. These increased resources were intended for the functioning of the observations groups, such local transportation (in Greece), UN staff, contractors and locally-recruited personnel, rental and maintenance of premises for each group and other miscellaneous expenses. These funds did not covered, however, the salaries, transport and equipment for the groups.²²⁷

The inadequacy of the budget for the Special Committee put it in uncomfortable situation, starting for the short period planned (only six months), the already above-mentioned insufficient resources for travel and absence of funds for medical services. All the UNSCOB operational existence was kept under the strict limits of the funds availability.

UNSCOB was financed under the regular budget provisions referred to the voice Investigations and Inquiries. The practice to finance the operations on the field through the regular budget was implemented till 1960 (ONUC), when the enormous costs of the operation in Congo and the debt accumulated for the one on the Suez Canal (UNEF), bring the entire organization on the edge of the financial failure. Then, it was decided to establish a specific budget for those operations.

In 1952, for the first time, the expenses appeared in the budget estimates were not listed under the heading 'UNSCOB' but 'UN Military Observers in Greece', that was the title given when this operation was assigned to an *ad hoc* created Sub-Commission of the Peace Observation Committee.

The financial dimension of the UNSCOB revealed the central role of the Secretary-General;

²²⁴ Cfr. A/AC16/18; A/AC16/19.

²²⁵ Cfr. A/AC 16/SR16; A/AC16/22; A/AC16/24; A/AC16/29.

²²⁶ With this decision, UNSCOB established another important element of the future of the peacekeeping, with the acceptance of the concept of voluntary contributions (goods and assets, services, personnel, funds) from Member States, where the ones especially provided by US represented in several occasions the necessary element to launch those, like in the case of the air bridges of the US Air Force which rapidly bring thousands of 'blue helmets' from the four corners of the world to the former Belgian Congo in 1960; Cfr. A/AC.16/79; A/AC.16/SR.32.

²²⁷ Cfr. A/AC.16/194.

while he was totally marginalized from the political side (except the presence in the ineffective Conciliation Committee), he played a key one in the also central aspect budgetary issue, fundamental for the implementation of the decisions of the Security Council and General Assembly.

Total Expenses of Military Observation in the Balkans 1949-1953 (US Dollars)²²⁸

Use \ Year	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
Temporary assistance	245, 132	200,425	159,644	31,252	37,725
Travel & Subsistence of members	76,797	98,816	82,190	--	--
Travel & subsistence of observers	381,742	196,604	78,086	22,626	14,036
Travel & subsistence of staff	178, 839	133,039	115,184	21,750	15,891
Communication services	5,471	6,316	4,510	943	700
Rental of premises	30,507	21,147	23,251	2,827	2,154
Stationery & office supplies	1,366	3,618	4,132	--	24
Local Transportation	4, 302	3,805	57,419	278	112
Freight, cartage & express	2,181	3,375	3,990	1,799	3,323
Insurance	35,660	14,183	1,953	29	869
Miscellaneous expenses	5,358	2,564	2,328	705	639
Miscellaneous equipments	4,861	391	1,794	272	241
Operation & maintenance of transportation equipments	--	24,387	24,223	5,336	2,290
Travel on home leave	3,916	--	--	--	--
Hospitality	150	307	354	196	141
Transportation equipment replacement	--	21,160	14,845	464	9,892
Total	976,282	730,137	571,903	86,648	86,028
General total					2,450,998

²²⁸ HIGGINS, R., *United Nations peacekeeping, documents and commentary*, Vol. IV, *Europe 1946-1979*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1981, p.57; personal elaboration.

Chapter 15

UNSCOB Operations

By mid-1950, most of the objectives set out in UNGAR 109 (II) were reached. These objectives were the cessation of the hostilities and the external support for the Greek guerrilla. However, remained incomplete the establishment of normal diplomatic and good-neighbourly relations between Athens from one side and Tirana, Sofia and Belgrade to the other,²²⁹ the control and pacific settlement of frontier incidents and co-operation over refugee problems.

However UNSCOB established, by interviewing, monitoring local radio broadcasts and holding a form of census, that children had been forcibly removed across Greece's borders and deported abroad, disclosed a serious and massive violation of human rights by the insurgents.²³⁰

A comprehensive assessment of UNSCOB role is difficult; external factors, undoubtedly played a great importance. The USSR-Yugoslav split was an element of great importance leading Belgrade's estrangement from the support to the KKE fighters as well as with a progressive, but prudent, rapprochement to the West economic and security architectures; thus the progressive reduction of Albanian and Bulgarian support to the insurgents, also originated by the Yugoslav schism, impacted on their logistic supply mechanism of the communist fighters.²³¹

Despite the limited direct impact, like the absence of any mediation between the parties, the presence of the Special Committee paved the way for a slow activation of a dialogue between Greece and its northern neighbours. This dialogue was not a coherent fact and saw differences, often based on pre-WWII situations, like border and ethnic issues.

UNSCOB, made a real and useful contribution in persuading the parties to establish contacts. A UN-led presence on the borders was useful, although its observation capabilities was severely hampered by the refusal of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to dispatch the observation groups on their own side of the borders.

The major problems which affected heavily the UNSCOB work were the language, resources in staff and assets and finances; also, the legacy of the Special Committee toward the framework and reports of the Security Council-established Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents (and its Subsidiary Group), which had found that Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia were lending massive military and economic assistance to the Greek insurgents, left an heavy imprinting on the work and ideological approach of the UNSCOB's life.

It should be remembered that no country is compelled to accept, under international law and practice, to accept UN military observers on its territory, with the exception if UN is engaged into an enforcement action.²³²

²²⁹ It should be mentioned that with Yugoslavia, when emerged the schism with USSR, and consequently the support of Belgrade was cut off well before the end of the military defeat of KKE.

²³⁰ Cfr. WHAINHOUSE, D. W., *International Peace Observation: a History and Forecast*, Baltimore, John Hopkins, 1966, pp.234-5; RIKHYE, I. J., *The Thin Blue Line, International Peacekeeping and its Future*, Yale University Press, 1974, p.145.

²³¹ Cfr. SHAREDER, C. R., *The Whitered Vine: Logistic and the Communist Insurgency in Greece, 1945-1949*, Praeger, Westport, 1999.

²³² Regulated by the Chapter VII of UN Charter - action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression, articles 39-51.

Article 39 - The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore international peace and security.

Article 40 - In order to prevent an aggravation of the situation, the Security Council may, before making the recommendations or deciding upon the measures provided for in Article 39, call upon the parties concerned to comply with such provisional measures as it deems necessary or desirable. Such provisional measures shall be without prejudice to the rights, claims, or position of the parties concerned. The Security Council shall duly take account of failure to comply with such provisional measures.

Article 41 - The Security Council may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the United Nations to apply such measures. These may include complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations.

Article 42 - Should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 would be inadequate or have proved to be inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations.

Article 43 - All Members of the United Nations, in order to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, undertake to make available to the Security Council, on its call and in accordance with a special agreement or agreements, armed forces, assistance, and facilities, including rights of passage, necessary for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security. Such agreement or agreements shall govern the numbers and types of forces, their degree of readiness and general location, and the nature of the facilities and assistance to be provided. The agreement or agreements shall be negotiated as soon as possible on the initiative of the Security Council. They shall be concluded between the Security Council and Members or between the Security Council and groups of Members and shall be subject to ratification by the signatory states in accordance with their respective constitutional processes.

Article 44 - When the Security Council has decided to use force it shall, before calling upon a Member not represented on it to provide armed forces in fulfilment of the obligations assumed under Article 43, invite that Member, if the Member so desires, to participate in the decisions of the Security Council concerning the employment of contingents of that Member's armed forces.

Article 45 - In order to enable the United Nations to take urgent military measures, Members shall hold immediately available national air-force contingents for combined international enforcement action. The strength and degree of readiness of these contingents and plans for their combined action shall be determined within the limits laid down in the special agreement or agreements referred to in Article 43, by the Security Council with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee.

Article 46 - Plans for the application of armed force shall be made by the Security Council with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee.

Article 47 - There shall be established a Military Staff Committee to advise and assist the Security Council on all questions relating to the Security Council's military requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security, the employment and command of forces placed at its disposal, the regulation of armaments, and possible disarmament.

The Military Staff Committee shall consist of the Chiefs of Staff of the permanent members of the Security Council or their representatives. Any Member of the United Nations not permanently represented on the Committee shall be invited by the Committee to be associated with it when the efficient discharge of the Committee's responsibilities requires the participation of that Member in its work. The Military Staff Committee shall be responsible under the Security Council for the strategic direction of any armed forces placed at the disposal of the Security Council. Questions relating to the command of such forces shall be worked out subsequently. The Military Staff Committee, with the authorization of the Security Council and after consultation with appropriate regional agencies, may establish regional sub-committees.

Article 48 - The action required to carry out the decisions of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security shall be taken by all the Members of the United Nations or by some of them, as the Security Council may determine. Such decisions shall be carried out by the Members of the United Nations directly and through their action in the appropriate international agencies of which they are members.

Article 49 - The Members of the United Nations shall join in affording mutual assistance in carrying out the measures decided upon by the Security Council.

Article 50 - If preventive or enforcement measures against any state are taken by the Security Council, any other state, whether a Member of the United Nations or not, which finds itself confronted with special economic problems arising from the carrying out of those measures shall have the right to consult the Security Council with regard to a solution of those problems.

However, giving the findings of the Commission of Investigation, UNSCOB noted that the very fact that Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia chose to exercise their sovereign rights was a further evidence of illegitimate activity by them against Greece. The observation groups, the eyes and ears of the Special Committee, submitted detailed reports on the situation, even if their values were limited by the above-mentioned limitations.

By the end of May 1948 the Special Committee, which have the operational HQ in Salonika, was able to dispatch five (out of the six planned) observation groups along the northern frontiers of Greece; Group 1 at Ioannina (Epirus) was exclusively tasked to monitor the situation on the Albanian-Greek frontier; Groups 2 and 3 located at Florina and Kilkis respectively observed the situation on the Greek and Yugoslavian frontier; Groups 4 and 6, at Kavalla and Alexandroupolis were concerned with the Greek-Bulgarian frontier. Initially, the freedom of movement of the observation groups was severely limited by guerrilla control of certain areas and by the extensive minefields laid down of insurgents along all the frontiers, in order to limit the mobility of Greek regular forces. Despite these limitations, the observation groups were consequently exposed to very considerable risks. Each group obtained information about its own AOR by patrolling by ground, in the majority, and by air as much of its AOR as possible, by visiting sites, the frontier and by interrogation of witnesses.

The Special Commission was a precursor of issues, which crossed the life of following peacekeeping missions, also on the subject of the protection and personal safety and integrity, as well as the freedom of movement, which is related to those especially in an open warfighting situation to monitor.²³³

This situation led to a severe criticism from the USA, which also suggested possible changes in this sense:

‘It appear to me that the only alternative possible at this time are: (a) to withdraw UNSCOB because of its admitted failure to function effectively in the border area, or (b) to furnish UNSCOB with armed contingents from various members of the UN in order that the members of the Committee may afforded adequate protection in the discharge of their duties. Since course (a) would be an admission of failure on the part of the UN body to carry out its appointed task, it would seem that the sole recourse is to strengthen UNSCOB so that it will reflect a spirit of determination on the part of the UN members to carry out the terms of the General Assembly resolution despite the subversive activities of the Balkan satellites [of USSR]. If UNSCOB should be withdrawn or should continue to languish in a weak and ineffectual position at Salonika, it can only result in discrediting and further weakening the UN.’²³⁴

The observation groups proved their effectiveness whenever they could approach the borders. Giving that they were stationed in areas of active military operations, their movements were

Article 51 - Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defense shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security.

²³³ The issue of the physical integrity of neutral observers and monitors was an institutional issue since the beginning of this kind of activities. In particular, as already mentioned, in 1923 a boundary definition mission dispatched by the Conference of Ambassadors of Paris, formed by Italian military and civilian personnel was massacred by allegedly by pro-Greek armed irregulars; the massacre of ‘Tellini’ mission, by the name of the chair of the delegation, originated a serious crisis between and the new fascist government of Italy, which shortly after bombard and occupied the island of Corfu.

²³⁴ Cfr. US Department of State, Under-Secretary of State to NEA Dept., 16 March 1948, USNA, 501. BB Balkan/3-1648.

subject of the Greek military authorities, who had accepted the responsibility for their safety. Especially at the early phases of the deployment of the observation groups was limited to the limited presence of Greek forces near to the border areas, which were in majority under control of the insurgents.

As consequence, the military policy of Greece was initially focused to consolidate firstly their position and then moving toward the frontier areas (as per map 1, there were several major concentration areas of insurgents in the whole Greece), and the observation groups were rarely admitted to the frontier areas.

The Special Committee received constantly from Member States information gathered by their intelligence agencies, which confirmed the persistence of external aid to the guerrillas, which these forces were granted of bases and medical assistance in Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia (for the latter till the summer 1948). Nonetheless, UNSCOB observers were not able to validate this flow of information, 'which we consider potentially the best implements for publicizing the activities of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia and for exerting some deterrent effect on these activities.'²³⁵

Even if the Greek forces requested the presence of the observers before operations, often, the same forces refused to protect them out of fear of drawing guerrilla fire; the only alternative was to provide the teams with international armed guards.²³⁶

The US and UK mainly assigned a political role to the protection elements of UNSCOB with the primary purpose of showing the determination of the United Nations to implement its recommendations, 'while reminding the peoples and governments of the [USSR] satellites to the north that the outside world is near and watching.'²³⁷

Further, 'the effect on the rebels' military position of a number of strong and self-contained military units marching back and forth through their strongholds and across their lines of communications is self-evident. [The] display of international forces [would serve] as evidence of Western determination aggressively to oppose Soviet imperialism. Another advantage would be the opportunity afforded would-be rebel deserter to surrender to UN troops where they might have feared to approach a Greek unit.'²³⁸

This show of determination was directed toward Greece as well as the Soviet block states.

Thus, a UN 'protection force' (using a modern term) would eliminate the dependence of UNSCOB observation groups to the Greek military. Apart the at time latter's ineffectiveness, this choice was considered necessary to increase the perception, more than the effectiveness, of impartiality of the Special Committee work and personnel. Past experiences showed that the EVS escort raised substantial objections.

Already in 1947, when the Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents was deployed and carried out some field investigations and interview of witnesses, the Soviet and the Polish delegates protested very strongly against the armed escort provided by EVS units. According to them, the presence of EVS personnel helped them to prepare later

²³⁵ Cfr. US Consulate Salonika to Secretary of State, 15 march 1948, USNA, 501.BB Balkan/3-1548.

²³⁶ The armed protection to the unarmed military observers emerged during the operation of UNTSO; it became ordinary practice that, when deployed with formed military units, the 'blue helmets', the observers, sometime labeled as 'blue berets', enjoy their protection in carrying out the work of observation and report. However, the degradation of security environment in some specific missions, led the UN to set up several UNGUs, in Iraq, Somalia, Libya and at the beginning of the operation in Central Africa Republic; those units, mainly tasked to protect the UN premises and staff are also under consideration also for Afghanistan and Western Sahara missions. Cfr. US-UK meeting on possible steps to strengthen UNSCOB, Washington, 23 March 1948, USNA, USUN Mission, RG 84, box 79.

²³⁷ Cfr. US-UK meeting on possible steps to strengthen UNSCOB, Washington, 23 March 1948, USNA, USUN Mission, RG 84, box 79.

²³⁸ Cfr. Ibidem.

retaliation against witnesses who pointed out the responsibilities of Greek government actions.²³⁹

Reasons against the dispatch of a military international force tasked to protect the Special Committee field operations were also strong. International troops activation in operational areas was perceived as a risk for the Greek government to relax its own military efforts and, in the other side, the possible deployment of foreign military forces, even UN-hatted, might entangle it in armed clashes that potentially escalates in a full-fledged war.

The provision of an independent mobile force for the protection of the UNSCOB field presence, with sufficient strength to penetrate, without the support of Greek forces, in the frontier regions would constituted a heavy military commitment. It was designed, ideally, a force of 4,000 troops. But this option, faced not only the political risk related to a possible involvement in combat against the Greek guerrilla, but also the firm position of the Member States totally against anything which represent additional financial burden.

This situation put the US in a difficult position, giving that Washington was the country which was the leading country in the international scene. For countries like Mexico, according to US diplomats, was much easy take stances than for Washington, even it was not Mexico which would in all probability provided the armed personnel tasked to protect the UNSCOB observation groups.

Furthermore, in considering the worldwide commitments of the US, a step in Greece should be carefully studied and analyzed in consideration of the impact that one move as such would have around the globe. It should be remembered that in this time there were three hundreds unarmed observers in the UNSCOP and that this personnel was scattered around a small but very problematic territory and it would a tremendous effort to provide armed protection for all those personnel.²⁴⁰

Finally, if there was established a consistent, politically speaking, precedent in Greece. The US and the international community would be called to provide a similar protection forces in Palestine too, much larger and with higher costs and wider risk to be involved in armed confrontation than Greece, due to the extreme volatile landscape in terms of security.²⁴¹ The Truman administration was extremely cautious in being directly grab in the Greek crisis and the UNSCOB observation groups did not see any protection and this limitation did not allowed to monitor and to report some of the most flagrant violations of the Greek frontier. Despite this, the observers risked often their lives in approaching the combat areas, while those were accompanied by attempts to obtain first hand testimony from witnesses and to collect evidence about the situation prevailing on the Greek frontiers. Until direct observation was allowed, interviewing witnesses was the major source of evidence of the Special Committee.

Before to be deployed, and during their deployment on the field, the members of the observation groups received initial and refreshing training periods. These courses included history, charter and notions principal organs and agencies of the United Nations. Giving the strong polarization *momentum* an ideological element was included, and the United Nations was presented as democratic barrier against communism and this was considered a vital element for the personnel scattered on the field.²⁴²

²³⁹ S/AC 4/301, Report by the Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents, 29 August 1947.

²⁴⁰ UNSCOP was the body which was initially dispatched in the former British Mandate of Palestine and preceded the activation of UNTSO, the first officially recognized peacekeeping mission by the UN, activated on 29 May 1948.

²⁴¹ Cfr. US Department of State Memo of conversation, by the Secretary of State, 31 August 1948, FRUS 1948, vol. 4, pp. 260-1.

²⁴² Cfr. DAG1/2.1.3:6, 23 March 1949, Memo from UN Assistant Secretary-General to UNSCOB Principal Secretary. However, the ideological dogmas issued by the US officials during the refresher trainings, seems not

Especially in the refresher courses there were included two additional issues: the procedures of the hearings conducted by the observers in order to gather information. The second one referred to the nature of border violation and what were labeled as 'breaches of good neighbourly relations' between Greece and its Balkan neighbours.

The observers were provided with a list of specific situations in order to facilitate their identification:

1. Training refugees with a view to subversive activities in their country of origin;
2. Aid to guerrillas infiltrating the frontier, for example, by providing transportation or by the collaboration of frontier guards during the crossing (of the border);
3. Liaison between guerrilla chiefs and foreign officers at frontier post approaches;
4. Sheltering guerrillas prior to their dispatch across the border as well as upon their return;
5. Hospitalization of wounded guerrilla in foreign territory;
6. Providing guerrilla with logistical support;
7. Foreign participation in military operations, firing across frontiers, military use of foreign territory during guerrilla activities, and aerial violations of national territory.²⁴³

The prolonged nature of the mandate of the Special Committee and the investigation nature of the mission led to the preparation of a document which should be all time with the all and each members of the observation groups, the 'Handbook for the Observers', which was re-edited several time in consequence of the lessons learned obtained from the experience from the observation on the field.

The handbook, jointly conceived by the UN Secretariat and the Special Committee included the forms for reporting frontier incidents and instructions on how to carry out an investigation and typical questions to addresses to the witnesses. It was ordered to report on the plight of international refugees – nationals of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Yugoslavia, who had fled or been expelled from their territories. The issue of minorities was also included with the instructions to give special attention to it.²⁴⁴

The monitor of the recruitment of guerrilla fighters, their camps and refugees shelters area, the type of aid furnished to the insurgents (e.g. intelligence, aerial observation) were among the points stressed by the Handbook, together with the tactical use of the territory of one country for operations against another one. There were also specific requirements for military installations and positions used for firing across the borders, tactical infiltrations from other territories and special attention of possible involvement of military personnel from Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia in the combat.

be negatively noted by the UN, despite were against the spirit and the letter of the role and work of the observers.

²⁴³ Cfr. A/AC16/SC1/16.

²⁴⁴ The border areas were inhabited by Chams, Vlachs/Aromanians, Slavophone, Greek-Macedonians, Pomaks and Turks. Like in all the Balkans the numerical and geographical identification of the minorities was a complicate issue, originated by the generic census made by the Ottomans and pursued by the successor states and manipulated in order to use it in favor of their external claims or internal repression needs. Vlachs/Aromanians is a historical term used for the Eastern Romance-speaking peoples in Central and Eastern Europe; around 150.000 at time traditionally lived in northern and central Greece, central and southern Albania, Southern Yugoslavia, SW Bulgaria; Pomaks, around 200.000 in the Balkans at time, is a term used for Slavic Muslims inhabiting Bulgaria, NE Greece, Southern Yugoslavia (and NW Turkey); Slavic Macedonians, are a South Slavic ethnic group native to the region of Macedonia, speaking Macedonian, a South Slavic language. About four thirds of them (one million at time) lived in Yugoslavia and the rest in the neighbourly countries; Cham Albanians, or Chams, are a sub-group of Albanians who originally resided in the Western part of the region of Epirus in NW Greece, an area known among Albanians as Chameria (around 40.000 at time).

The medical assistance of wounded insurgent personnel, logistic supply chains crossing the borders were also included, aside to monitor the media propaganda, collection of both voluntary and compulsory taxes, expulsion of foreign nationals and confiscation of their properties, abduction of peasants and livestock and violation of airspace.

Also the handbook reflected the evolution of the civil war and the relations among the states in the region. Focusing on the neighbourly relations (the legacy of the conciliatory mandate of the Special Committee), the handbook of 1950 recommended the observers to monitor this aspects, complying the UNGAR 109 (II). The issue of the kidnapped children growth massively in consideration of the insisting demand of the Greek government, Greek and international public opinion.

The relations of the personnel with the local authorities on the field was also carefully addressed. The neutrality and impartiality remained as a main concern and it was strongly recommended in every occasion.

The issue of credibility of witnesses was a point of extreme attention, however giving the relation between UNSCOB, the guerrilla and the neighbor states was practically inexistent (only POW and deserters from the insurgents and fugitives from Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia provided information to the Special Committee) and the Special Committee rely almost exclusively on the ones provided by the Greek liaison personnel or, but in minimal part, on the ones identified by UNSCOB itself.

The general credibility of UNSCOB depended also on the very limited strength of the mission. With its six groups deployed, the Special Committee realized since the beginning this size could allow the establishment of credible mechanism of surveillance on the situation on the borders and that this situation would affect very minimally the flow of logistic support to the insurgents from Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

Despite this kind of limits, the Special Committee was in condition to reach certain conclusions concerning the situation on the northern frontiers of Greece, starting to the ascertainment of absence of good-neighbourly relations between Athens in one hand and Tirana, Sofia and Belgrade on the other.

Again, the evolution of politico-military situation impacted on the quality of the work of the Special Committee and reporting it. The effect of the Yugoslav schism came into effect already during 1949 and on May of 1950 Belgrade and Athens agreed on the exchange of Ministers and the re-activation of their frozen diplomatic relations, the first step of path which led to the signature of the signature of the Greek-Yugoslav-Turkish Pact on 28 February 1953.²⁴⁵

Albania and Bulgaria take more time to normalize their relations with Athens, and even if officially, interned and disarmed the EVS fighters, the incidents at the border with Greece continued in 1950. While with Albania there were no direct contacts neither with Greece or the Special Committee. With Bulgaria instead, the Special Committee observers acted as useful intermediary, did not played direct role in the Bulgarian-Greek meetings, despite a more fluctuant situation marked by a more frequent number of border incidents.²⁴⁶

In January 1952, the Special Committee ended up its works. UNPOC, which was established under auspices of 'Uniting for Peace', agreed to the request to establish a Sub-Commission for the Balkans.²⁴⁷ The Sub-Commission, formed by a very limited number of military observers (differently from UNSCOB where there were also civilian observers) initiated its activities but not neither in 1952 nor in 1953 submitted reports to UNPOC. The annual report

²⁴⁵ Cfr. A/307, 3rd Report of UNSCOB, 31 July 1950.

²⁴⁶ Cfr. A/935, 2nd Report of UNSCOB, 2 August 1949, A/1857, 4th Report of UNSCOB, 15 August 1951.

²⁴⁷ Cfr. UNGAR 508 (VI), 7 December 1951.

of the Secretary-General for the period of July 1953 – July 1954 reports²⁴⁸ only one significant border incident. Giving the prevailing calm in the border areas of Greece with Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia the six military observers were reduced to three for the end of 1953. On 28 May 1954, the Balkan Sub-Commission decided to disband the observers group.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ Cfr. A/2663, 21 July 1954.

²⁴⁹ The Sub-Commission itself appear never to have been formally terminated, though it ceased to exist too at the same moment, Cfr. WHAINHOUSE, D. W., *International Peace Observation: a history and forecast*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1966, p. 237.

Chapter 16

Conclusions

The main question that this study raises on the extent of achieving peace in the Balkans through the work of the UNSCOB and the limitations of the achievements is approached in a historical way that exposes the different challenges the UN mission has been facing since its inception. The present study is an attempt of contextualizing the work of the UNSCOB and comparing it to other UN missions. It resulted in highlighting similarities and differences and the measures that were successful in serving peace. A number of findings are to be highlighted in this respect relating to the limits and successes of the UNSCOB's work during the considered period.

This period was followed by the post-Cold War period that saw massive explosion of intrastate conflicts, which replaced interstate ones that had prevailed earlier. The UN tried to find solutions for this new challenge that targets the international community. Its answers were not always at the level of the threat posed by those conflicts. The UN missions found, therefore, themselves impotent observers of massive killing and atrocities.

The expansion of the Cold War had naturally an impact on the UN command structure. The UN Office for Special Political Affairs was created by the second Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld to manage the growing requirement the Cold War peacekeeping operations. Originally, the office had both an American and a Soviet official as equals. Further to the ordinary management of the peacekeeping operations, they took on projects that were not specifically under the mandate of the Secretariat, like conflicts control. For the first three years (1955-1957), the office was referred to as the Office of Under-Secretaries without a specific Department assigned.²⁵⁰ Till up to the late 1980s, UNOSPA did not have more than a dozen of staffers and their limited number impacted negatively the conduct of complex operations like the case of the former Belgian Congo which was marked by lack of coordination between the HQ in New York and the mission on the ground.

The enormous development of peacekeeping operations was transformed in UNDPKO and massively expanded in terms of staff and capacity in command, control and communication as well as of logistic support with the establishment of three huge logistic bases, located in Brindisi (Italy), Entebbe (Uganda) and Valencia (Spain).²⁵¹ All the civil wars which stormed (till today) Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, Cambodia, Central America, Darfur (Sudan), Haiti, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Mozambique, RCA, RDC, Rwanda, Salvador, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, saw the deployment of more or less massive UN military forces and contingents of police.

The UN missions often operate aside to not-UN forces (NATO, AU, 'coalition of willing's'), but the unarmed observers, sometime present, were reduced in role, even if their number remained important, like in the missions which operated, under different names, since 1999 in DRC.

²⁵⁰ The first Under-Secretaries-General were Ralph J. Bunche (USA, 1955-1970) and Ilya S. Tchernychev (USSR, 1955-1956), followed by Anatoly F. Dobrynin (USSR, 1957), Sir Humphrey Trevelyan (UK, 1958), C.V. Narasimhan (India, 1959-1961), Omar Loutfi (Egypt, 1962), Dragoslav Protitch (Yugoslavia, 1963-1964), Jose Rolz-Bennett (Guatemala, 1965-1970), Roberto E. Guyer (Argentina, 1971-1978), Brian E. Urquhart (UK, 1972-1985), Javier Perez de Cuellar (Peru, 1979-1980), Diego Cordovez (Ecuador, 1981-1988), and Marrack I. Goulding (UK, 1986-1991).

²⁵¹ Marrack Goulding was the first chief of the Department till March 1993, when his deputy Kofi Annan (Ghana), replaced him and lead it till 1996, when he was elected as the seventh Secretary-General of the organization.

The missions in Syria and Colombia were the last, in order of time, formed exclusively by unarmed military observers. UNSMIS operated (or try to operate) only for few weeks, but the level of the violence on the ground and lack of any dialogue between government and opposition, forced the UN to withdraw it after few weeks of deployment. The one in Colombia, which see the establishment of another one tasked of the long-term verification the implementation of the agreements, had a better result, due to a clear political agreement between the parties (government and armed opposition movements), signed before the deployment of UN mission.

Currently, there are only four at the present time, UNTSO, UNMOGIP and MINURSO, MINUC (on the way to be replaced by MINUVEC) reflecting that this operational profile (and political framework) is perceived as marginal in the current situation, where the increasing attacks against the UN personnel, obliged the organization to have on the ground forces with self-defense and implementation mandate capabilities also to avoid the criticism of the TCCs/PCCs.

This situation, together with the substantial disappearance of the good offices, fact-finding activities of the present days, reflect the new stance and legal as well as the political framework of the organization.²⁵²

The turbulent '40s saw the last civil war that had no direct foreign intervention or direct, massive participation of 'blue helmets' as it was in former Belgian Congo and Cyprus (and later in many other places).

UNSCOB mission was marked by the fact, for reasons, of dealing only with Greek governmental authorities. Among all the missions dispatched, with different nature, format, mandate and strength, the Special Committee appeared to be the most successful despite some minus. One of the major limits, which affected the legitimacy of UNSCOB was the fact that it was appointed and supported by only one side and that it was denied to the fundamental character of a UN activity, the cooperation of all the side concerned. As the Greek civil war was a unique situation, the Special Committee was too a unique case.

UNSCOB was the first real field operation on the ground, organized by the organization (regardless if was not put under the direction of the Secretary-General).

In the life of the entire operations are recorded elements which marked the operations of stabilization of the organization (within the term stabilization are included the peacekeeping, peacemaking, peacebuilding, peace-restoration and the UN-led and organized peace-enforcement missions).

Those could be, partially, listed in:

- Definition of a clear and realistically implementable mandate;
- Loyalty to the organization and its aims of personnel (seconded or not);
- Clear and transparent support (political, military and financial) from the Member States;
- A defined structure of command, control and communication;
- Cooperation of all the concerned parties;
- Efficient and effective management of human resources and material assets;

As said, the UN is a political organization and the politics overcome sometime the principle on which it is based. This situation is reflected in all the pro and cons of this summary list. The nature of the mandate (regardless of the body that issued it whether it is the Security

²⁵² In recent times, these, all belonging to the UNDP, are the CICIG; the UN Commission of Inquiry into the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, the former PM of Pakistan; the International Commission of Inquiry on the 28 September 2009 events in Guinea; and the UN International Investigation Commission in the assassination of former Lebanese PM Rafik Hariri.

Council or the General Assembly) is a basic issue. The lack of clarity and realism, or a bad compromise between divergent positions among the Member States, negatively affects all the life of the mission as well as the implementation of the mandate.

UNSCOB, as tool established during a moment of serious ideological polarization, witnessed some cases of proximity of observers, especially from US and UK, with their countrymen advisors of the Greek forces, affecting the image and substance of impartiality of the mission, even if in the training of the observers, the UN was presented as a bastion against the hegemonic action of other group of states; the loyalty of the UN personnel remain a major challenge and it should be enforced also in case of the seconded personnel (military, police and civilians) to the organizations as well as for the directly-hired ones.

The relations of the Member States with the Special Committee was an intricate mixture of positions, where the manipulation of the UNSCOB action took a different level, as well as the perception of it. The ambiguous stance of some Member States in providing political support, military and civilian observers, as well as financial funds necessary for a proper work is a negative example, which saw many other cases. Paradoxically, the hostile position of the Soviet bloc was more clear and acceptable, even based into an ideological view of the organization and of the Special Committee, and the organization too, considered by Moscow and proxies, as a servant of the Western bloc hegemonic projects.

The UNSCOB was a new case for the organization, which answered as the best possible, in consideration that the administrative structure for the entire UN was moving the first steps. The firm hand of the Principal Secretary allowed the Special Committee to work in difficult situation (Greece, already a poor country before WWII, was severely affected by the physical and moral destruction of the war against the Axis and the civil war).

The lack of cooperation of Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia was the first case of hostile stance of concerned parties. Many UN missions faced (and face today) situation which ran from the formal acceptance of an alien presence to the patent hostility.

UNSCOB, among many innovative things, inaugurated the concept of the voluntary contributions from Member States. This concept, parallel with the requirement of proper management of organization-own assets, remain a sensitive issue of the life of the organization due to the risk of political manipulation that the voluntary contribution means.

The Special Committee, together with other similar bodies established in the beginning of the life of the United Nations, was more similar to the spirit and the practice to the few examples set up by the predecessor organization, the League of Nations. In those bodies, generally numerically limited the role of the Member States was preponderant and the functions provided by the organization, via its personnel from the Secretariat were minimal.

This situation was due to cultural and functional reasons. There was still predominant the marginal role of the international organization, like it was for the League (in this the League inherited the principles which established the Conferences of States and Ambassadors of XIX and beginning of XX Century), role that the United Nations want to change.

Secondly, the Secretariat of the organization was still under construction, without a permanent seat, scattered between Paris, London, New York and Geneva and with a very limited number of staff, including the ones transferred from the League to United Nations.

(The limited number of staff of the League, less the 100 professionals and 400 administrative supporters, was considered one of the reasons of the poor performances of the Geneva-based organization).

Just after a decade, the organization, with a more solid structure, but with a persistent uncertain political support from Member States divided by the Cold War, was able to play a growing role in the field operations, cornering the role of the Member States in to a politico-administrative-financial and military control made at the central level and in providing military and police personnel in the various peace-keeping operations.

It remained however, an initial role of the Member States in the UN field machinery, but only into the missions dispatched by the Department of Political Affairs and also in this area, with the consolidation and massive expansion and specialization of the staffing of the Secretariat, their effective role on the field decreased. The Secretariat through the Department of Political Affairs, with his mediation and political investigation teams, progressively removed the last presence of the Member States from the field.

Between UNSCOB (and other similar entities established in the late '40s) and the present days, the peacekeeping saw major evolutions and changes, from the Cold War to the multipolar world, from the unarmed personnel to attack helicopters, from the high visibility of vehicles and personnel to the camouflage.

Both extremes recorded, and record today, a large amount of results. In this sense the UN intervention in the post WWII Balkans is an example of it. The Special Committee (the Special Sub-Commission played a much minor role, operating in a political scenario marked by decisive improvement of inter-states relations in the region) was an effective tool which avoided that a local crisis escalated in a much wider conflict.

The few observers of the Special Committee avoided the possible deployment of US and Western troops on the borders of Greece with Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia reducing the risk of confrontation with Moscow proxies and the same USSR following.

The mission, despite suffering the under dimension, strength and capacity, provided a much larger impact over the region stability. However, as mentioned before, several external factors (to the UN and to Special Committee) facilitated it. The first was, aside the Yugoslav schism, the ambiguous approach of Moscow, which did not hesitate to abandon the long time planned KKE insurgency after having boosted it and realizing that the plan to include Greece in socialist block of states moved to the collapse. At the same time, the weakest stakeholder, Greece, show a unexpected determination facing the brutalities of the insurgency and did not renounced to the claims against Albania and did not ceded vis-à-vis the claims of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, blocking for several years any possibility to launch a UN-led mediation (regardless carried out by UNSCOB and/or Conciliation Committee).

Athens, despite a fragmented, frantic and limited political landscape (due to the exclusion/self exclusion of KKE and the marginalization of the moderate left) enjoyed a strong support from UK and US. Washington expressed in this regard the toughest criticism toward the corruption and inefficiency of the public administration; thus the mentorship to the armed forces progressively extended to the economic dimension and political control, as emerged on the dynamics of the Greek parliamentary vote of spring-summer 1952.

The US, which emerged as the main stakeholder of Western economic and military architecture, saw the UN involvement as a useful tool to reduce the influence of Moscow in critical corner point between Mediterranean, Europe, Middle East and Africa. The support of Washington was determinant in collecting the cohesive consensus in the General Assembly toward the Special Committee and kept it till necessary, when the military situation was stabilized in favor of Greek government and when Yugoslavia firmly pursued in an autonomous path, away from the USSR hegemony.

The dependency of the Special Committee to the Assembly limited the effectiveness of the action of UNSCOB, due to the absence of real enforcement capability of the Assembly. However, despite this limit, due to the Soviet vetoes, the Security Council could not intervene at all in the Greek crisis.

The mediation aspect of the UNSCOB remained in the limbo, due the practical impossibility by the Special Committee to investigate on it (due to the inexistence of cooperation from Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia) and under a more broader view, the no results of the Conciliation Committee showed that the space for it was very limited and that the rivalries

between Athens and his northern neighbors were more profound than the one originated by the KKE insurgency.

Like many other UN operations on the field, the UNSCOB contained several elements of analysis. Not all were adopted by the organization. The first organic one was made only in 1958, on decision of the then UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld who instructed the Secretariat to begin a careful study and analysis of the UNEF experience in order to give the United Nations a sound foundation, "should the Organization wish to build an agreed standby plan for a United Nations peace force that could be activated on short notice in future emergencies to serve in similar ways".²⁵³

The 'Summary Study', even focused on an operation with formed troops, set out a series of principles relating to key aspects of peacekeeping process such as host state (or authority in case of de-facto powers on the ground), the appropriate type of contributing states, freedom of movement, political neutrality and financing. These, were key aspects of UNSCOB work became in Hammarskjöld view, should form the basis of a future peacekeeping model of operation.

The 'Summary Study' was prepared on initial reports on UNEF but included the lessons-learned from other UN previous missions. While acknowledging that the UN mission at Suez Canal had characteristics which would not necessarily be replicated in future emergencies, it was sought to identify certain basic principles and rules which would provide an adaptable framework.

Key relations between Chapter VII of the UN Charter, peacekeeping missions (a.k.a. Chapter VI and half) and UNSCOB²⁵⁴

Key element	Chapter VII	Peacekeeping	UNSCOB
Trigger of UN action	Identification of aggression/aggressor	Identification of crisis	Requested action by a Member State
Contributing TCCs/PCCs, others	Chosen and led by permanent Security Council Members	Middle and small powers, preferably not part of opposed military organizations (e.g. NATO)	Member States of Security Council
Basis of participation	Article 43 of UN Charter (Legal obligation)	Voluntary	Designated by the General Assembly
Control	Security Council	Security Council or General Assembly	General Assembly (1 st Committee – Political Affairs)
Relationship with concerned parties	Imposed	Consensual	Consensual (not implemented in one side)
Methods	Coercive military action	Interposition, observation, use of coercive military action in the implementation of a peace-restoration mandate	Border, monitoring, mediation (not implemented)
Objective	Secure pre-determined outcome	Create conditions for political settlement	Create conditions for political settlement

²⁵³ A/3943, Report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, Summary Study of the Experience Derived from the Establishment and Operation of the [UN Emergency] Force, 9 October 1958.

²⁵⁴ MACQUEEN, N., *The United Nations, Peace Operations and the Cold War*, 2nd Edition, Seminar Studies in History, Harlow, Logman, New England, 2011, p.44, personal elaboration.

Peacekeeping, as said before, was not envisaged in the Chapter VII, there was therefore no obligations to take part to operations (and in the case of UNSCOB, USSR and Poland, although invited did not provide delegate for the Special Committee and Pakistan and Australia, despite seating in did not provided the members for the observation teams for the field operations). In other words, a peace operation could not be forced on a country. National sovereignty remained central in relation to any arrangement that the UN might put in place.

The United Nations itself is an inter-governmental organization based on the principle of sovereign equality, which it is applied also to non-member states (as were Albania and Bulgaria until December 1955, when they joined the organization).

The principle of host state consent, and in a lesser degree to the de facto authorities, like it was for the territories under the control of the communist insurgency in Greece, is more in reality than in theory. Concerned states and irregular parties as well, would be hardly persuaded to agree to the presence of UN personnel presence, regardless of their juridical status, military, civilian, hired directly or seconded to the organization, on its own territory as it was for Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

The issue of the host consent is strictly related with the freedom of movement of the UN personnel, where the political consent is close to the issue the personal safety and security of those personnel.

Further, in general terms, the participation of the personnel of some Member States (namely mainly US, UK, France, the Netherlands) at the UNSCOB was reason of criticism from the insurgency and the communist states.

This situation was repeated in different scenario arriving to the cases of the UN mission in Namibia and Iraq where military contingents (Swedish in the first case) and for the second case for US, British and Australian government-seconded experts were banned to that territories.

Further, nationals from the mentioned countries directly hired by the organization were not allowed by the same organization to work in those areas.

Thus, despite the host state/authorities in principles have no rights to dictate the composition of UN missions deployed on their territory.

As final words, the entire UN-led action and machinery in the Balkans (Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents and the Subsidiary Group, the Special Committee, the Conciliation Committee, the Sub-Commission) did not achieved fully their mandate in consideration of the little room of a possible settlement between Greece and its northern neighbors without the direct involvement of the Great Powers (namely US and USSR) which have instead divergent views, approaches, priorities and agendas.

The UN inquiries and observation operations operated within a Greek, Balkan and global interests and conflicts. This grid of convergent and divergent trends, new and old, made these activities uneasy. The UN observers (from UNSCOB and Sub-Commission), and the organization as well, was at the center of persistent attacks, more verbal than physical from both sides and consequently praised and blamed, scorned and admired. This situation saw stability and fluctuation. The stability in the negative judgment came for the USSR, proxies and communist insurgents, while from the Greek government, public opinion and media fluctuated from the negative to the positive, following the evolution of the military situation on the ground.

The UN observers, as already mentioned, were considered a useful and innovative tool to reduce tensions, but did not succeed in mediation, instead witnessed the ties between the insurgents and Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, contribute to prepare the terrain for a non-UN led conciliation.

The personnel of United Nations inaugurated the tradition to operate under instructions and guidance's of high moral standard, which considered them as the wardens, eyes and hears, of

a democratic world. Sometime their stance was polarized due to ideological position or instruction of their governments.

Chronology

Crisis Phase (1 March 1935 – 2 December 1944)

General George Kondylis suppressed a rebellion led by General Kamenos in Athens, Macedonia, and Crete (1-2 March 1935), and Eleutherios Venizelos fled into exile to France (where he died on 18 March 1936);

General Kamenos and 20 other individuals were sentenced to death for their involvement in the rebellion;

Parliamentary elections and the LK won 243 out of 300 seats in the National Assembly (9 June 1935);

Prime Minister Kostantinos Tsaldaris was overthrown in a military rebellion led by General Georgios Kondylis (10 October 1935);

Greeks voted to restore the monarchy in a plebiscite held (3 November 1935), and King George II returned from exile in London (24 November 1935);

Parliamentary elections, and the LP won 127 out of 300 seats in the National Assembly. The LK (Popular Party) won 69 seats in the National Assembly (26 January 1936);

Kostantinos Demertzis formed a government as Prime Minister (15 March 1936);

Prime Minister Demertzis died on 13 April 1936, and General Ioannis Metaxas formed a government as Prime Minister (14 April 1936);

Government police and demonstrators clashed in Salonika resulting in the deaths of 12 individuals (9 May 1936);

Former Prime Minister Tsaldaris, leader of the LK, died (16 May 1936);

General Metaxas dissolved the parliament and declared martial law (4 August 1936);

The government suppressed a rebellion in Crete (29 July 1938);

Italian troops attack Greece from Albania (28 October 1940);

General Metaxas died on 26 January 1941 (other sources report 29 January);

German troops attacked Greece (6 April 1941);

British and Commonwealth forces landed in Greece (21 April);

Armistice between the Greek and the Germans forces, signed by General George Tsolakoglou (23 April 1941);

Athens captured by the Germans (27 April 1941);

Bulgarian forces enter in Greece (30 April 1941);

King George and cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Emmanouil Tsouderos, fled from Crete to Cairo (24 May 1941);

German airborne invasion of Crete (20 May 1941);

Allied evacuation of Crete (1 June 1941);

Joint Declaration of US President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British PM Winston Churchill, a.k.a. Atlantic Charter (14 August 1941);

Napoleon Zervas forms EDES (9 September 1941);

KKE forms EAM (21 September 1941);

United Nations Declaration signed by 26 nations, (including Greece) affirming the principles of the Atlantic Charter (1 January 1942);

KKE forms ELAS (10 April 1942);

Col. Eddie Myers and British SOE (Special Operations Executive) team arrives in Greece.

Launch of Operation 'Harling' (April-June 1942);

BLU (British Military Mission) established (September 1942);

Konstantine Logothetopoulos replaces General George Tsolakoglouas as PM of Greek collaborationist government with Axis (1 December 1942);

Ioannis Rallis becomes Prime Minister of Greek collaborationist government (7 April 1943);
 Conference on Food and Agriculture, Hot Spring, Virginia, establishment of FAO (28 May- 3 June 1943);
 Operation 'Animals'- carried out by the British SOE in cooperation with the Greek Resistance support of Allied invasion of Sicily (7-9 July 1943);
 Cairo Conference (9 August 1943);
 Italy surrenders to Allies (8 September 1943). Italian forces in Greece begins surrender to Germans and strengthen ELAS and EDES (September);
 Clashes between the resistant movements start the 'first round' (12 October 1943);
 ELAS, EDES, BLU meet at Plaka Bridge in Epirus to settle peace between themselves (12 February 1944);
 'Plaka Agreement' ends 'first round' of civil war between the anti-Axis resistance forces (29 February 1944);
 Josip Broz Tito forms a government in Yugoslavia. (8 March 1944);
 EAM forms PEEA (10 March 1944);
 Elements of EDES kill in Filiates one hundred Albanian Chams and 30.000 fled to Albania (13 March 1944);
 Pro-Communist mutiny in the Greek forces in the Middle East begins. to (31 March 1944);
 PEEA organised free elections by secret ballot throughout 'free Greece' (areas under EAM-ELAS control) to create a 'National Council' of 202 delegates (9 April 1944);
 Army pro-Communist insurgents in Middle East suppressed by British and Greek loyalist forces (23 April 1944);
 Lebanon Conference (17-20 May 1944);
 George Papandreou becomes Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity (26 April 1944 – 3 January 1945);
 Bretton Woods conference on postwar financial organization (1-22 July 1944);
 Soviet mission to Greek guerrillas under Col. Popov (28 July 1944);
 Dumbarton Oaks conference Charter of the UN (21 August- 9 October 1944);
 EAM agrees to join government in exile (3 August 1944);
 Communist coup in Bulgaria (9 September 1944);
 Greek government moved from Egypt to Italy (15 September 1944);
 'Caserta Agreement' between Greek parties representatives for a national coalition government (26 September 1944);
 Moscow Conference; Churchill and Stalin discuss spheres of influence in the postwar Balkans (9 October 1944);
 German troops withdrew from Athens; first British airborne drop over Megara airfield (Athens) and beginning of operation 'Manna' with massive arrival of British troops (12 October 1944);
 Greek Government return to Greece (17 October 1944);
 The 'second round' of armed confrontation between the Greek anti-Axis resistances forces begins (November 1944);
 Establishment of UNRRA (9 November 1944);
 EAM ministers resign from the government over the issue of demobilisation of ELAS (2 December 1944);
 Government police fired on demonstrators in Athens on 2 December 1944, resulting in the deaths of 20 individuals;
 Bloody KKE-EAM demonstration in Athens, a.k.a. 'Dekemvriana' (December Events). several hundred individuals were killed during the crisis; (3 December 1944);
 British forces support Papandreou government with heavy clashes between British troops and Communist armed elements (December 1944);

Churchill flies to Athens looking for an agreement, which would stop the war (25 December 1944);

Archbishop Damaskinos of Athens appointed Regent of Greece (31 December 1944).

Conflict Phase (December 3, 1944-January 15, 1945)

ELAS began an armed rebellion against the provisional government (3 December 1944).

Some 75,000 British troops intervened in support of the government beginning on 4 December 1944 and were involved in heavy fights, especially in the Athens region. Some 10,000 individuals were killed during this crisis conflict, including some 250 British soldiers; General Nicholas Plastiras became Prime Minister on 1 January 1945; (other sources refers to 11 January)

Representatives of the government and ELAS agreed to a ceasefire on 15 January 1945. This cease-fire is considered the end of the 'second round' of the civil war;

Post-Conflict Phase (16 January 1945 – 11 February 1946):

Establishment of BMM (G), replacing the BLU (7 January 1945);

Yalta Conference (4-11 February 1945);

The Greek parties signed the 'Varkiza Agreement' on 12 February 1945, which provided for government recognition of the KKE. With the 'Varkiza Agreement', end of 'second round', 'third round' of armed confrontation between anti-Axis resistance forces begins. ELAS officially ceased to exist. 50.000 communists' fighters exiled in Albania (24000), Yugoslavia (20.000), Bulgaria (6.000);

Some 13,000 individuals were arrested and held as political prisoners in 1945;

The UN Conference on International Organization, San Francisco, California (25 April – 26 June 1945);

PM Plastiras resigns (April 1945);

End of war in Europe; German forces the Dodecanese surrender instrument is signed in Symi (8 May 1945);

Signature of the UN Charter (26 June 1945);

Preparatory Commission of UN met in London (August 1945);

Admiral Petros Voulgaris takes over to resign in October 1945. Regent PM for a few days, succeeded by Panagiotis Kanellopoulos (November 1945) and Themistoklis Sofoulis (November 1945-March 1946);

Nikos Zahariadis returns from Dachau and reassumes leadership of the KKE from Georgios Siantos (Acting Secretary-General since 1942) May 1945;

Aris Velouchiotis (war name of Athanasios Klaras) the most prominent leader and chief instigator of ELAS, the military branch of EAM, murdered in unclear circumstances (16 June 1945);

Clement Attlee, become PM of Great Britain (26 July 1945);

Britain, France, and the US agreed to the government's request to monitor the upcoming parliamentary elections (19 September 1945);

Seventh KKE Congress. Zakhariadis appeal to the readiness for a military action (4 October 1945);

FAO established at a meeting in Quebec City as a specialized agency of the UN (16 October 1945);

Conference of San Francisco. The UN is founded by ratification of its Charter by 29 nations. The ICJ ("World Court") established by the UN Charter.

Gladwyn Jebb of UK serve as Acting Secretary-General until the election of a Secretary-General (24 October 1945);
 Yugoslavia join the United Nations (24 October 1945);
 Greece join the United Nations (25 October 1945);
 First meeting of UNESCO, in London (1-16 November 1945);
 AMFOGE arrived in Athens (27 November 1945);
 Massive Communist demonstrations in Athens presage the Greek Civil War (3 December 1945);
 The first session of UN General Assembly convened in the Methodist Central Hall in London with representatives of 51 nations (10 January 1946);
 Enver Hoxha declares the People's Republic of Albania, with himself as PM (11 January 1946);
 The UN Security Council holds its 1st session at Church House, Westminster in London (17 January 1946);
 Trygve Lie of Norway selected as the first UN Secretary-General. Dissolution of the Preparatory Commission of the UN (1 February 1946);
 1st General Assembly of the UN (Westminster Central Hall in London) (10-14 February 1946);
 Judges of Permanent Court of International Justice of LoN resign (31 January 1946);

Conflict Phase (12 February 1946 – 4 November 1949)

Second Plenum of Central Committee of the KKE. Communists units led by 'General' Markos Vamvakis resumed the rebellion against the government in northern Greece on February 12, 1946 (second phase of the 'third round');
 AMFOGE, which consisted of 1,155 observers from Great Britain (294 observers), France (169 observers), and the US (692 observers), monitor the parliamentary elections;
 UNGA passed the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (13 February 1946);
 Guerrilla attack on Litokhoros (area where Albania, Greece and Yugoslavia borders met) marking the beginning of the 'third round' of the civil war (30 March 1946);
 Parliamentary elections, and the right-wing coalition front of HPE, headed by Constantinos Tsaldaris won 191 out of 317 seats in the parliament, with the abstentions of KKE (31 March 1946);
 Some 20 individuals killed in election-related violence on 29-30 March 1946;
 AMFOGE mission reported that the elections were "free and fair" (11 April 1946);
 Konstantinos Tsaldaris of the LK formed a government as prime minister (18 April 1946);
 Last meeting of the Assembly of the LoN in Geneva and de-activation of the Organization;
 Sean Lester of Ireland appointed as the third Secretary-General of LoN transfer all its assets to UN (17-19 April 1946);
 Beginning of Paris Peace Conference (29 July 1946);
 The plebiscite on the Greek monarchy (1 September 1946), although the Communists boycotted the elections (AMFOGE monitor this vote and, as the previous one, found it "free and fair");
 Political violence intensifies during the summer of 1946, while the KKE boost the organizations of its forces in mountainous areas of the country;
 Soviet veto at the UNSC on Greek matters (20 September 1946);
 First major clash between Greek National Army and communist armed elements near Deskate, resulting in the deaths of some 120 communists fighters (21-22 September 1946);
 King George II returned to Greece from exile in Egypt (27 September 1946);

Communist rebels starts to receive military assistance from Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Albania (August-September 1946);

End of Paris Peace Conference (15 October 1946);

1st General Assembly of the UN (Queens Arts Museum at Flushing Meadows, New York) (23 October -15 December 1946);

Establishment of DSE (28 October 1946);

Greece accused Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Albania of provided military assistance to the communist rebels. Bulgaria denied the accusation (28 November 1946);

Greece referred the matter to the UN Security Council (3 December 1946);

The UN Security Council unanimously establishes an eleven-member Commission of Investigation (Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Republic of China, Columbia, France, Poland, Soviet Union, Syria, UK and the US) (19 December 1946);

Demetrios Maximos of the LK formed a coalition government as PM on 27 January 1947;

UK officially informed the US government that it would be unable to continue to provide economic and military assistance to the Greek government after 31 March 1947 (there were British 14,000 soldiers and 1,380 British military and police advisors in Greece at the beginning of 1947. For the end of that year, the British formed units counted 5.000 troops) (21 February 1947);

The Greek government formally requested US economic and military assistance (3 March 1947);

Enunciation of the 'Truman Doctrine' (12 March 1947);

King George II die (1 April 1947);

Operation 'Terminus-Aetos' clear the areas of Mount Agrafa, Aheloos river, Nevropolis, Koziakas, Metsovo, Roumeli (5-20 April 1947);

Establishment of USAGG (14 April 1947);

Enthronement of King Paul (brother of George II) (22 April 1947);

Activation of AMAG (1 May 1947);

Operation 'Terminus-Ierax' clear the areas of Hasia, Antihasia, Kambounia (11-21 May 1947);

The US government formally approved economic and military assistance to the Greek government (22 May 1947);

The Commission of Investigation finalize its report in Geneva (23 May 1947);

Activation of USAGG (19 June 1947); The US government provided the Greek government some \$500 million in military assistance (equipment, training, and 450 military advisors) beginning on 24 May 1947;

Operation 'Terminus-Korax' clear the areas of north of Mestovo to the Albanian border, Kastoria. Operation 'Terminus-Kuknos' clear the areas of Mount Olympos, Pieria (25 May -7 June 1947);

Secretary of State George Marshall address to the graduating class of Harvard University announcing the launch of a plan for the post war European economies (5 June 1947);

The UN Commission of Inquiry, issued a report on 27 May 1947 (made public on 25 June 1947), which substantiated Greece's accusations against its neighbors;

Congress of French Communist Party in Strasbourg with the announcement of statehood plans of KKE after the victory in civil war (25-29 June 1947);

UN Security Council resolutions pertaining to the Commission of Inquiry's report were vetoed by the USSR (June 1947);

Operation 'Terminus-Pelargos' clear the areas of Mount Ossa, Pyllo (1-15 July 1947);

The US demand to refer the matter of the "threats to the political independence and territorial integrity of Greece" from UNSC to the UNGA (20 August 1947);

PM Demetrios Maximos resigned (24 August 1947);

Themistocles Sofoulis formed a government as PM (7 September 1947);

Third Plenum of KKE. Formulation of 'Limnos' (Lake) Plan – the creation of a free area in Macedonia, Thrace and Epirus regions with Salonika, as 'provisional capital' (12-15 September 1947);

Creation of COMINFORM (5 October 1947);

Forty-seven communists are executed for their involvement in terrorist activities (17-23 October 1947);

UNGA adopted Resolution 109 (II), which established the UNSCOB to mediate negotiations between the parties (21 October 1947);

UNSCOB consisted of 18 delegates from nine of eleven members of the UN Security Council – Australia, Brazil, Republic of China, France, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, UK and the US, supported by UN Secretariat civilian staff and observers from Brazil, Republic of China, France, Mexico, the Netherlands, US, UK (between two and four observers from April 1948 to July 1951); the observers were commanded by Brig. Gen. H. W. D. MacDonald from UK (as Chief Observer) to monitor the border regions;

Activation of JUSMAPG (1 November 1947);

UNSCOB establishes the operational HQ in Salonika (the main HQ is in Athens) (1 December 1947);

Greece referred the matter of Yugoslav aggression to the UN Security Council (29 December 1947);

Markos Vaphiades announced the formation of the PDK of Greece (24 December 1947);

Battle of Konitsa begin (25 December 1947);

The Greek government officially banned the KKE (27 December 1947);

Greece accede to the Convention of Privileges and Immunities of the UN (29 December 1947);

General William Livesay appointed as chief of JUSMAPG (31 December 1947);

End of battle of Konitsa with the defeat of DSE (1 January 1948);

1st Interim Report of UNSCOB (9 January 1948);

2nd Interim Report of UNSCOB (19 January 1948);

19 communists' activists executed for their involvement in the 1944 Rebellion (22 February 1948);

Major reshuffle of EVS and DSE structures (February 1948);

Lt. Gen. James Van Fleet arrives in Greece as Commander of JUSPMAG (24 February 1948);

US President Harry S. Truman signs the ERP (a.k.a. 'Marshall Plan') (3 April 1948);

Operation 'Dawn' of EVS against DSE (15 April – 26 May 1948);

A communist killed minister of Justice Christos Ladas and a police officer in Athens (1 May 1948);

43 communist activists executed for their involvement in the 1944 rebellion (4-6 May 1948);

Establishment of UNTSO (29 May 1948);

Effective launch of ERP (a.k.a. as 'Marshall Plan') (3 June 1948);

Operation 'Crown'. Government troops launched a military offensive against communist rebels, resulting with 590 Greek soldiers and 3.128 insurgents KIA (20 June – 20 August 1948);

Begins of Berlin Blockade (24 June 1948);

26 communists' activists executed (25 June 1948);

Expulsion of Yugoslavia from COMINFORM (28 June 1948);

1st Report of UNSCOB (30 June 1948);

US President Truman formally offer military aid to Greece and Turkey (12 July 1948);

Operation 'Vitsi' of EVS against DSE (August-October 1948);

3rd UN General Assembly at Palais de Chaillot in Paris (September-December 1948);
 Establishment of TEA, as auxiliary units of the EVS (1 September 1948);
 1st Supplementary Report of UNSCOB (10 September 1948);
 Intensification of DSE reorganization along conventional lines (Autumn 1948);
 General Papagos appointed Stratarchis (Field Marshall) (1 October 1948);
 The Greek government controlled territory submitted to the martial law (1 November 1948);
 In the Palais de Chaillot in Paris the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 December 1948);
 Field Marshall Papagos re-assumes the command of the Greek armed forces (21 January 1949);
 Establishment of UNMOGIP (24 January 1949);
 Establishment of UNCI (28 January 1949);
 Fifth Plenum of KKE Central Committee (30-31 January 1949);
 Two UNSCOB military observers killed in a plane crash (17 February 1949);
 Operation 'Pigeon' (February-March 1949);
 Signature in Washington of the North Atlantic Treaty (4 April 1949);
 DSE forces end up the operations in Peloponnese and South-Central Greece due to the pressure of Greek governmental forces in the 'Operation Rocket' (April-June 1949);
 Archbishop of Athens Damaskinos Papandreou dies (20 May 1949);
 PM Sofoulis die (24 June 1949);
 Alexander Diomedes formed a coalition government as Prime Minister (30 June 1949);
 Massive reinforcement of Greek governmental forces (Summer 1949);
 2nd Report of UNSCOB (2 August 1949);
 Operation 'Torch A' in Mount Grammos area (5-10 August 1949);
 Operation 'Torch B' in Vitsi (10-16 August 1949);
 Yugoslavia ended military assistance to the rebels (27 July 1949);
 Albania ended military assistance to the rebels announces disarmament and detention DSE personnel (26 August 1949);
 Yugoslavia close the border with Greece (11 September 1949);
 The communist rebels proclaimed a unilateral ceasefire (16 October 1949);
 General Alexander Papagos re-appointed Stratarchis (Field Marshall) (28 October 1949);
 Both sides ended military hostilities (4 November 1949); (Some 130.000 individuals, including 38.000 communist rebels, 17.000 government soldiers, 80.000 civilians and 3 US military advisors, were killed during the conflict. 26.000 government and 76.000 insurgents WIA. 40.000 leftists were in prison and concentration camps. Over 5.000 of them received death or life sentence. Almost 10% of the population had taken refuge in Bulgaria, Albania, Yugoslavia and USSR. Some 850,000 individuals were labelled as IDPs)

Post-Conflict Phase (5 November 1949 – 31 July 1954)

PM Alexander Diomedes resigned (5 January 1950); and Ion Theotokis formed a provisional government (6 January 1950);
 King Paul dissolved the parliament (07 January 1950);
 Nicolaos Pastiras and Emmanuel Tsouderos create EPEK (14 January 1950);
 Last British formed unit leave Greece (1 February 1950);
 Parliamentary elections (5 March 1950), and the Populist Party (PP) won a plurality of 61 out of 250 seats in the parliament. The KF won 53 seats in the parliament;
 Sophocles Venizelos formed a government as PM (23 March 1950);
 UNSCOB observer wounded by fire from Bulgaria (6 April 1950);
 Nicolaos Plastiras formed a government as PM (15 April 1950);

Greece (and Turkey) formally apply to join NATO (30 April 1950);
 Greece and Yugoslavia decide the normalization of their diplomatic relations, frozen since 1945 (21 May 1950);
 Yugoslavia closed its embassy in Albania as relations between the two nations deteriorated (30 May 1950);
 Beginning of Korean war (26 June 1950);
 3rd Report of UNSCOB (31 July 1950);
 Plastiras government resigns (19 September 1950);
 Venizelos-Papandreou government (21-23 September 1950);
 Markos Vafiadis leave Greece for exile in USSR (October 1950);
 Albania and Yugoslavia cease diplomatic relations (11 October 1950);
 Venizelos-Tsalدارis-Papandreou takes the oath (13 September 1950);
 New government Venizelos-Papandreou (3 November 1950);
 UNGA adopts resolution 377 (V), the "Uniting for Peace" (3 November 1950);
 First Greek units departs to join the UN Command forces in Korea (15 November 1950);
 Creation of Populist Unity Party-LEK (6 January 1951);
 Field Marshall Alexander Papagos resigns from the position of the C-in-C of Greek Armed Forces (29 May 1951);
 Alexander Papagos sets up ES (6 July 1951);
 4th Report of UNSCOB (2 August 1951);
 General election, the ES, headed by Alexander Papagos won a plurality of the vote (9 September 1951);
 EPEK-ES form a coalition government (18 September 1951);
 NATO admits Greece and Turkey (20 September 1951);
 King Paul appointed General Nicholas Plastiras of the PK as PM (29 September 1951);
 Anglo-Iranian Oil conflict (October 1951);
 Winston Churchill become Prime Minister of Great Britain (26 October 1951);
 New Plastiras-Venizelos government (27 October 1951);
 Churchill government (27 October 1951);
 6th UN General Assembly at Palais de Chaillot in Paris (November 1951-February 1952);
 New Greek constitution (21 December 1951);
 UNSCOB is disbanded (7 December 1951);
 The last UNSCOB member leave Greece (1 January 1952);
 The UN General Assembly established a new military observation mission (Balkan Subcommittee of the UNPOC), which consisted of six military observers (Colombia, France, Pakistan, Sweden, Britain, US) commanded by General H. W. D. McDonald of UK as Chief Observer, to monitor the Bulgaria-Greece border (23 January 1952); (the group was named UNMOG);
 End of Mission for the BMM (G) (29 January 1952);
 Accession of Greece and Turkey into NATO as full members (18 February 1952);
 US intervention promoting simple majority electoral system (14 March 1952);
 The Parliament votes for simple majority (12 September 1952);
 The Parliament dissolved, new elections (10 October 1952);
 Interim government led by Dimitris Kiousopoulos (11 October 1952);
 7th UN General Assembly opened in the new compound in Manhattan, New York (14 October 1952);
 Dwight D. Eisenhower wins the US Presidential elections (2 November 1952);
 General Parliamentary elections (16 November 1952); the ES won 238 out of 300 seats in the parliament. The PK won 62 seats in the parliament;
 Alexander Papagos formed a government as PM (19 November 1952);

End of the mandate of the UN Secretary-General Trygve Lie (31 December 1952);
Signature of the Greek-Yugoslav-Turkish Pact (28 February 1953);
Josif Stalin dies (5 March 1953);
The UN Security Council nominates Dag Hammarskjöld from Sweden as UN Secretary-General (13 March 1953);
Nikita Khrushchev is selected First Secretary of the USSR Communist Party (14 March 1953);
Dag Hammarskjöld from Sweden elected as second UN Secretary-General (7 April 1953);
Armistice signed in Korea (27 July 1953);
Re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Greece and Bulgaria (19 May 1954)*;
Greece demand to UNPOC the discontinuation of Balkan Sub-Commission (28 May 1954);
The last UN military observers were withdrawn from Greece (31 July 1954);
Execution by Greek authorities of the KKE official Nikos Ploumpidis, as last death sentence civil war-related (14 August 1954);
Albania and Bulgaria join the United Nations (together with Austria, Cambodia, Finland, Jordan, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Libya, Laos, Nepal, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sri Lanka) (14 December 1955).

* (The diplomatic relations between Greece and Albania were restored on 13 November 1971; the ones with Yugoslavia were never interrupted, but frozen with the recall of their Ambassadors in 1945)

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACABQ -	Advisory Commission on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;
AMAG -	American Mission to Aid Greece;
AMFOGE -	Allied Missions of Foreign Observers for the Greek Elections;
AOR –	Area of Responsibility;
AP -	Astynomia Poleon (Urban Police);
BLU -	British Liaison Unit;
BMA -	British Military Administration;
BMM (G) -	British Military Mission (Greece);
C-in-C -	Commander in Chief;
CICIG -	Comisión Internacional contra la Impunidad en Guatemala;
COMINFORM -	Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties k. a. Communist Information Bureau);
DOMREP -	Representative of the Secretary-General in the Dominican Republic;
DoS –	Department of State (US);
DPRK -	Democratic People's Republic of Korea;
DSE -	Dimokratikos Stratós Ellinikos (Democratic Army of Greece);
EAM -	Ethnikón Apelevtherotikon Metopon (National Liberation Front);
EDES -	Ethnikós Dimokratikos Ellinikos Syndesmos (National Democratic [Republican] Greek League);
ELAS -	Ellinikós Laïkós Apeleftherotikós Stratós (People's Liberation Army);
EOEA -	Ethnikes Omades Ellinon Andarton (National Groups of Greek Guerrillas);
EPEK -	Ethniki Proodeutiki Enosi Kentrou (National Progressive Center Union);
ERP -	European Recovery Programme;
EVA -	Ellinikí Vasilikí Aeroporía (Royal Hellenic Air Force);
EVS -	Ellinikós Vasilikí Stratós (Royal Greek Army);
ES -	Ellinikós Synagermos (Greek Rally);
FAO -	Food and Agricultural Organization (of the UN);
FO -	Foreign Office;
FRUS -	Foreign Relations of the United States;
HQ -	Headquarters;
HPE-	Inoméni Parátaxis Ethnikofrónon (United Alignment of Nationalists);
IAPF -	Inter-American Peace Force;
ICJ -	International Court of Justice (of the UN);
ICRC -	International Committee of the Red Cross;
IDPs –	Internally Displaced Person(s);
IEF -	Initial Entry Force;
JUSMAPG -	Joint US Military Advisory Planning Group;
JUSMAG (G)-	Joint US Military Advisory Group (Greece);
KIA -	Killed in action;
KF -	Kómma Filelefthéron (Liberal Party);
KKE -	Kommounistikó Kómma Elládas (Communist Party of Greece);
LoN -	League of Nations;
LK -	Laiko Komma (People's Party);
MINUC -	Misión de la ONU en Colombia;

MINURSO -	Misión de las Naciones Unidas para el Referéndum en el Sáhara Occidental/ Mission des Nations unies pour l'organisation d'un référendum au Sahara Occidental;
MINUVEC -	Misión de la ONU para la Verificación en Colombia;
MPs -	Member(s) of Parliament;
NATO -	North Atlantic Treaty Organization;
NEA -	Near Eastern and Africa (Affairs);
OAS/OEA -	Organization of American States/ Organización de los Estados Americanos;
ONU -	Organisation des Nations Unies ;
ONUC -	Opération des Nations Unies au Congo;
PCCs -	Police Contributing Countries;
PDK –	Prosoriní Dimokratikí Kyvérnisi (Provisional Democratic Government);
PM -	Prime Minister;
Perm. Rep. -	Permanent Representative;
PEEA -	Politiki Epitropi Ethikis Apeleftherosis (Political Committee of National Liberation);
POW -	Prisoner of War;
PK -	Proodefitkon Komma (Progressive Party);
PRO -	Public Records Office;
RCA -	République centrafricaine;
RDC -	République démocratique du Congo;
RN -	Royal Navy;
ROK -	Republic of Korea;
RTR -	Royal Tank Regiment;
SOE -	Special Operations Executive;
SOFAs -	Status of Forces Agreements;
SOMAs -	Status of Mission Agreements;
SSI -	Shoulder Sleeve Insigne;
SSR -	Soviet Socialist Republic;
TCCs -	Troop Contributing Countries;
TEA -	Tágmata Ethnofylakís Amýnis (National Guard Battalions);
TOR -	Terms of Reference;
UN -	United Nations;
UNC -	UN Command;
UNCI -	UN Commission on Indonesia;
UNCIP -	UN Commission on India and Pakistan;
UNCCI -	UN Consular Commission on Indonesia;
UNCCP -	UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine;
UNCOK -	UN Commission on Korea;
UNCURK -	UN Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea;
UNDOF -	UN Disengagement Observer Force;
UNDPA -	UN Department of Political Affairs;
UNDPKO -	UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations;
UNEF -	UN Emergency Force;
UNESCO -	UN Organization for Science, Education and Culture;
UNFICYP -	UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus;
UNFS -	UN Field Service;
UNIFIL -	UN Interim Force In Lebanon;

UNGA -	UN General Assembly;
UNGAR -	UNGA Resolution;
UNGOC -	UN Good Offices Committee;
UNGUs -	UN Guard Units;
UNIPOM -	UN India-Pakistan Observer Mission;
UNMOGIP -	UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan;
UNMOG -	UN Military Observers in Greece;
UNOGIL -	UN Observer Group in Lebanon;
UNOSPA -	UN Office of Special Political Affairs;
UNPOC -	UN Peace Observation Committee;
UNRRA -	UN Recovery and Re-habilitation Agency;
UNSC -	UN Security Council;
UNSCOB -	UN Special Committee on the Balkans;
UNSCOP -	UN Special Commission in Palestine;
UNSCR -	UNSC Resolution;
UNSF -	UN Security Force;
UNSMIS -	UN Supervision Mission in Syria;
UNTOK -	UN Temporary Commission on Korea;
UNTEA -	UN Temporary Executive Authority for West Irian/West New Guinea;
UNTC -	UN Truce Commission;
UNTSO -	UN Truce Supervision Organization;
UNYOM -	UN Yemen Observer Mission;
UK -	United Kingdom (of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
USAAG -	US Assistance and Advice Group;
US -	United States;
USAGG -	US Army Group, Greece;
USNA -	US National Archives;
USSR -	Union of Soviet Socialists Republics;
USUN -	US Mission to the UN;
VC -	Vasilikí Chorofylakí (Royal Gendarmerie);
WIA -	Wounded in Action;

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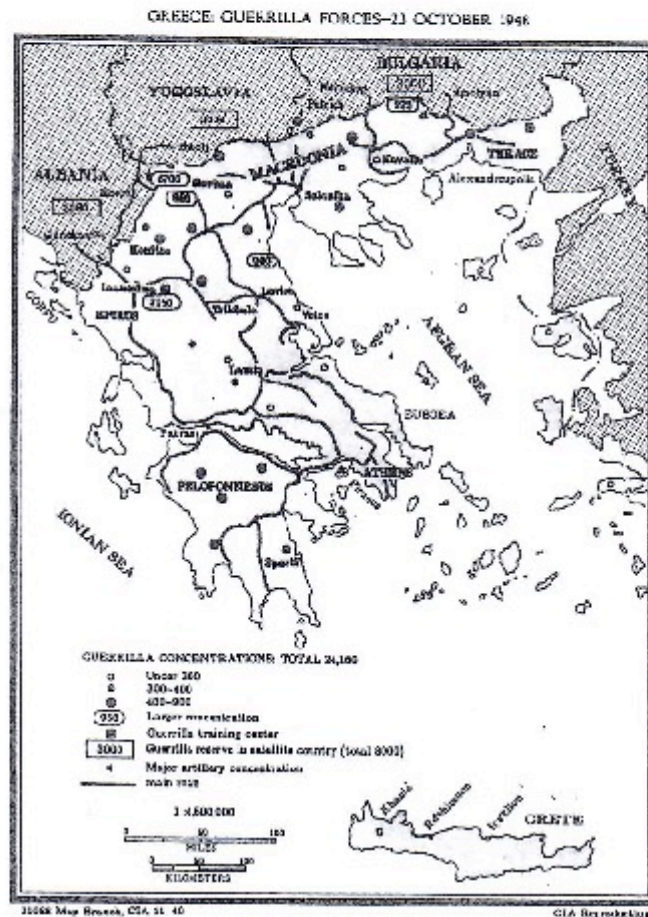
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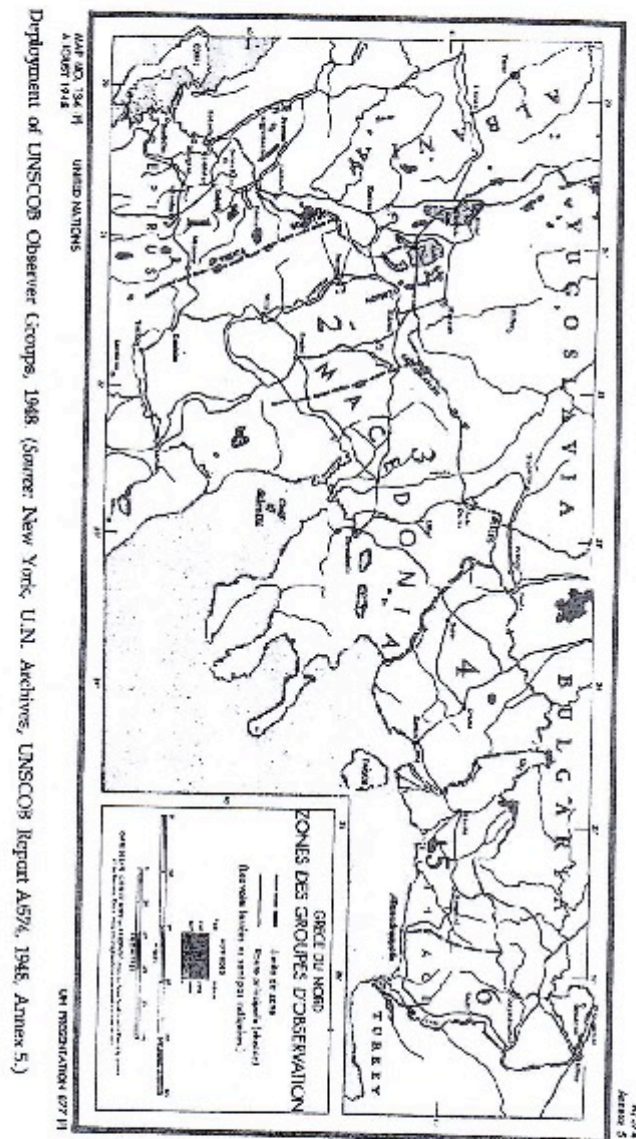
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Images and maps



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Members of UNSCOB observation group, local interpreter and Greek Liaison Officer, no date and/or location (Getty Images), consulted on 2 August 2017;



A member of UNSCOB observation group, local interpreter and Greek Liaison Officer, no date and/or location (Getty Images), consulted on 2 August 2017;



Interrogation of witness by UNSCOB observation group, no date and/or location (Getty Images), consulted on 2 August 2017;



Observation of Yugoslav frontier area. Left to right: Greek liaison officer; UNSCOB Observer Jeffrey (United Kingdom), two Greek soldiers, UNSCOB Observer Monsalve (Mexico). 1 May 1949, Photo # 83932, consulted on 10 August 2017;



UNSCOB jeep at the Hotel 'Mediterranean' Salonika, Cfr: <https://www.defensie.nl/onderwerpen/historische-missies/missie-overzicht/1947/united-nations-special-committee-on-the-balkans-unscoob/fotos>, consulted on 25 August 2017;



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Greeks gendarmes at gate of Pavlos Mellas Prison, outside Salonika, visited by a team of UN Commission of Investigation at the request of Yugoslav and Bulgarian Liaison Officers who claimed prison a concentration camp and inmates Greek democrats and Yugoslav, Bulgarian and Albanian quislings. 1 March 1947, Salonika, Greece. UN Photo # 145533, consulted on 10 August 2017



Meeting of the Commission of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents, no date and/or location (Getty Images), consulted on 2 August 2017;



Turkish women wear their typical garb on the streets of a Macedonian town in Yugoslavia – one of a series of pictures taken by official UN photographers accompanying the Commission of Investigation. 1 April 1947. Yugoslavia. UN Photo # 355442, consulted on 10 August 2017;



UNSCOB Observer Galula talking to a refugee family living in a temporary barrack at Kastoria, Northern Greece. There are 12,000 refugees in the village. 01 May 1949 Kastoria, Greece. UN Photo # 144306, consulted on 10 August 2017;



Partisans and villagers of Kastanophyto, near Greek border, dance for second investigating team of UN Commission of Investigation. 14 March 1947, Kastanophyto, Greece, UN Photo # 112755, consulted on 10 August 2017;



A peasant woman, in the ruins of her home, tells to UNSCOB observers team what she knows about the raid. 01 May 1949, Greece. UN Photo # 83935, consulted on 10 August 2017;



The frontier area is under constant surveillance. UNSCOB Observers study the region near Aghia Paraskevi in Northern Greece. 1 May 1949 Greece. UN Photo # 83933, consulted on 10 August 2017;



UNSCOB Observer Graham questioning a Greek refugee family, in their temporary barracks at Ioannina. [Exact date unknown, between 21 October 1947 and 7 December 1951] Ioannina, Greece. UN Photo # 80001, consulted on 10 August 2017;



An observer of UNSCOB talks to old man in refugee village in Louros valley. [exact date unknown], Louros Valley, Greece. UN Photo # 80002, consulted on 10 August 2017;



Figure 5: United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB) service cover postmarked June 4, 1948 by a member of the American Delegation in care of the American Consulate General in Salonika and sent to St. Louis, Missouri apparently to a family member.



Figure 6: United Nations service cover posted in Salonika, Greece on November 12, 1952 by United Nations Military Observer in Greece stationed in Salonika on November 12, 1952 to Stockholm, Sweden.

Envelops of the Mail & Pouch Service of UNSCOB, (unknown source), consulted on 2 August 2017;